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WHAT DO WE MEAN BY EDUCATION?



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TORONTO

# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY EDUCATION ?

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## PREFACE

5.9.20 J. W.

WE live in an age of great educational unrest. For many years enthusiasts have preached 'education' as a cure for all social ills, and vast sums have been expended on schools. Yet the result is a very general dissatisfaction, and the voice of the doubter becomes more insistent as the demands on his purse increase. Parents are often apathetic, sometimes hostile. Employers of all grades complain that young people come to them from the schools badly trained, wanting in initiative and adaptability, and in power of serious concentration. Social reformers confess that there is little sign of a general elevation of the national character, even when they do not lament its decadence. Everywhere it is frankly questioned whether the country is getting an adequate return for the money it expends on the schools. Yet, never have teachers, as a body, been more intelligent, more enthusiastic, more devoted.

Still, the enthusiasts demand an increase of school life as an unfailing remedy for school defects, and continually schemes of training are put forward for removing all cause for complaint. Unhappily these show no agreement among themselves, are generally based on superficial analysis of the problem, and often involve inconsistent principles.

The general consensus that the results of past efforts

are disappointing, shown both by the complaints that are so common and by the numerous and transient proposals for reform, suggests the need for an investigation into fundamental principles. For, unless the foundation is sound the building cannot be secure. This is the task I have undertaken.

I am profoundly convinced that theory of education cannot be separated without disaster from theory of life. The general disappointment with the results of the work of the schools seems to me to be largely due to the misconception that the school is the only educational agent. Thus the term 'education' is applied exclusively to what is only a small part of education, and that part of intrinsically minor importance ; and then from that fragment results are expected which only education in all its fullness can produce. This is to separate education from life, to narrow its aims to the direct and immediate results of school work, and to disregard the organic unity which must exist between all forms of educative effort if the result on life, truly to be desired, is to be attained. That education in the widest sense is the great lever for raising humanity is true. That the school alone can apply that lever is false. In order that the work of education may succeed, it must be a co-operation between all who are charged with the bringing up of children, and it must fix its gaze steadily on the whole range of that life for which it attempts to prepare. So the fundamental question must be faced of what that life means, and of the qualities that make it excellent. Then comes the secondary questions of how the desired result is to be secured, and what part in the work legitimately belongs to each of the communities in which the child lives and from which he receives formative impulses.

It is to such considerations that I have addressed myself. No attempt has been made to work out methods in which the principles I advocate may profitably be applied. For my general views on such practical questions the reader is referred to other books in which I have already discussed them. The present work may be regarded as a consideration of the assumptions which underlie what I have there written. But it is the principles that matter. Nothing is more foreign to my thought than that my own plans are the only ways in which those principles can be carried into effect. Each educator will be most truly an educator when he works freely under the guidance of vital principles which have become part and parcel of himself.

J. W.

THE UNIVERSITY, LEEDS,  
*June, 1914.*



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## CHAPTER I

### THE END RULES THE MEANS

“WHAT education is, and how the young should be educated, are questions that require discussion. At present there is difference of opinion as to the subjects which should be taught; for men are by no means in accord as to what the young should learn, whether they aim at virtue or at getting the best out of life. Neither is it clear whether education is more concerned with intellect or with character. And the question is brought no nearer solution by reference to the actual practice of contemporary education: no one knows whether the young should exercise themselves in those studies which are useful in life, or in those which tend towards virtue, or in those of essentially theoretical interest. All these opinions have found supporters. Furthermore, there is no agreement as to the means of cultivating virtue; for different people, starting from different conceptions of the virtue which all respect, naturally differ as to how the practice of it should be cultivated.”<sup>1</sup>

So wrote Aristotle more than two thousand years ago, and in our own day his remarks are as truly descriptive of current opinions as they were in his own. Now, as then, there is no general agreement as to what is meant by education, for there is no agreement as to its aim.

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle: *Politics*, v. (viii.) 2.

Learning for its own sake, acquisition of knowledge and skill likely to be useful in life, training in morality, development of individuality ; each has its advocates. Nor are those advocates tolerant of each other's views. A liberal education is often opposed to a utilitarian training, a primary reference to the needs of adult life is contrasted with the immediate requirements of child nature, and though the upholders of each may grant the importance of moral goodness, none of them seems prepared to make this the determining factor in the educative process.

Now it may be granted that some of these divergencies of view are due to differences in the use of the term 'education.' In every-day speech the work of education is commonly narrowed down to scholastic influences, and a person who has been to good schools and to a university is termed an 'educated' man, while one who has not enjoyed such means of culture is styled 'uneducated.' Yet it is matter of common knowledge that the latter may admirably fill his sphere in life, and the former may egregiously fail to do so, and that, moreover, such instances are not uncommon. "Many members of the middle and upper classes are too badly educated for any sort of work, whilst very many poor people are splendidly educated in subjects which seldom figure in school curricula, such as horse-management, farming, fishing, machinery, traffic, making a little go a long way."<sup>1</sup>

In this sense, then, a good 'education' has been of little real service to the one, nor has a defective 'education' been a serious obstacle to the other. Such a result condemns this narrow use of the term. Moreover, it is generally recognized that influences other than

<sup>1</sup> Reynolds and Woolley : *Seems So!* ch. 20.

those of school are brought to bear upon the young, and that they are too powerful to be neglected in practice. But they are not usually as carefully organized and systematically exerted as are those of school, nor are they commonly treated with the same care in works on education. So that, neither in theory nor in practice are they recognized as inevitable educative forces.

The first point, then, to be made clear is that education is not a matter for schools and universities exclusively, but that it includes every purposive human influence brought to bear upon the young. It does not seem that the term can legitimately be extended further, so as to include every influence on the developing life; for it is only conscious efforts that can be brought under rule and deliberately arranged with the aim of securing a certain desired result. It may, then, be urged that the greatest educational reform needed in our day is the more explicit practical recognition by parents and others in charge of children of their own inalienable educative responsibility, and of the limitations both of the responsibility and of the power of school.

When once this is clearly seen it is evident that many of the current disputes about the aim of education are directly concerned with the aim of school work, and only indirectly with the nature of that fuller preparation for life which is included in the wider and more accurate use of the term. Not that the two are theoretically separable. Into a complete conception of education the work of school enters as an important factor, and one causally related to the end sought by the whole process. But in practice the separation is possible, and not infrequently actual. Many parents have but a vague idea of what they desire their children to become,

and an equally indefinite notion of what the school to which they send them is seeking to accomplish. They accept the school and its work conventionally, or they regard its province as narrowly utilitarian, thus implicitly denying its full educative function. On the other hand, the school is liable to be influenced by tradition or by passing fashion rather than determined by a philosophical conception of its real work and aims. So it may happen that parents and school are out of harmony, and, in consequence, that these two great sets of educative forces to some extent neutralize each other.

That the work of every school is in relation to the lives of many families with more or less divergent aims for their children makes it impossible that the desired harmony should ever be more than wide and general. But such harmony as is possible is certainly desirable, and it can be reached only through a growing apprehension of the true meaning of education, and of the relative educative functions of family and school.

When it is recognized that some of the current disputes about education are not really concerned with the process as a whole, but only with that part of it which is undertaken by schools, one cause of misunderstanding is undoubtedly removed. But the question then arises as to whether these differences of opinion as to what the schools should aim at doing are not expressions of yet more fundamental divergencies as to the general aim of education, and not mere disagreements as to means.

It may be generally accepted that what is done in school is instrumental, and that the wider ultimate aim must be sought in the whole of life. But this at once raises the question as to the relative worth of the various aims and diverse forms of human endeavour, and men

differ now, as they have always differed, in their estimates of these. Nor is this difference merely a practical one, due to divergencies in religious, political, or social, conditions. It is deeper than that. It is a difference as to the ultimate meaning of life itself; as to what constitutes the real good of a human being—the *summum bonum* for which human nature itself determines men to strive in proportion as they apprehend it. Is that ultimate aim the closest possible union with God, shown in a life of loving obedience to divine commands authoritatively enounced; and, if so, what are the commands, and how, when, and through what channel, have they been revealed? Or is it the service of our fellow men; and, if so, is that service due equally to all mankind, or especially to such a limited portion of it as the state or organized community in which one lives, or to the yet narrower circle of relatives and friends; and, in either case, is the service best rendered by working directly for men's spiritual uplifting, or for the amelioration of the material conditions of their lives? Or is it the perfection of our own individual lives; and, if so, is that perfection to be sought in the cultivation of all our capacities, or in the deliberate suppression of some for the sake of others? Or again, should we place our own happiness as the goal of our endeavours; and, if so, will it be found in the efficient exercise of our powers, in absolute submission to a conceived law of duty, or in the enjoyment of the greatest number of agreeable experiences possible to us, evaluated solely by their durability and intensity?

According to the answer given to such enquiries as these must be the conception formed of the aim which conscious educative effort should set before itself, and,

consequently, the nature of that effort, and the emphasis laid on the various factors which by general agreement are included in the educative process. For, whatever is in dispute, all agree that the work of education is meant to be formative. Even the most strenuous advocates of free spontaneous development conceive that development as determined by various reactions on its activity, and though they exclude those of frankly exercised authority, they admit those of carefully planned experiences.

Educative effort, therefore, is of necessity related to the end sought, and all theory of education is an attempt to lay down general principles of such effort. Like ethics, it has a practical outlook, and its interest is by no means abstract and speculative. Its connexion with practice is of the closest. In all educative effort the opinions held by the educator as to the aim of education and the relative values of life's activities are operative, though often unconsciously. If those theories of life are confusedly and vaguely apprehended, embracing, it may be, incompatible elements, then the effort is wanting in definiteness of aim, and is to that extent doomed to sterility. If they are held clearly, the result gained may be expected to approximate in general character to that sought, for on the growing life a continuous and consistent force has been brought to bear, and what external influences are capable of accomplishing they may be expected to accomplish.

But till agreement has been reached as to the real meaning and end of life it is vain to expect that the same conceptions will be operative with all educative agents. The work of each school of thought, and, to a less extent, of each individual educator, will embody principles related to the doctrine of life accepted, and these,

ultimate and hidden beneath the surface though they be, determine the form and the force given to each set of influences brought to bear. Analysis can only yield those principles. So that it is vain to hope that by inductive enquiries into actual educative work, similar to those which have yielded such marvellous results in physical science, ultimate and unvarying laws can be reached.

The laws of the physical world are invariable, and are found indifferently exemplified in phenomena of the same kind, however externally diverse these may appear to common observation. The facts of astronomy embodied the same law when interpreted by the Ptolemaic as when thought under the Copernican theory. The facts were given to human investigation, and the law which always existed in them had to be found. But in educative practice there are no facts in which works an immutable law, whether it be understood or misunderstood. That there may be such laws of human conduct need not here be questioned. All theories of ethics are endeavours to formulate them. Doubtless, it may be urged that all human success, and all human failure, if we rightly apprehend in what success and failure consist, are positive and negative means of verifying hypotheses of such laws. Were these reached, the principles of sound education could be deduced from them. But an inductive enquiry into actual educative practice cannot lay bare more than the actual human purposes which inspired it. Behind these it cannot get, and so it cannot lead us to ultimate principles of life by which to evaluate them. The facts involve the purposes, and these are relative to the ultimate view of life which is matter of dispute and disagreement.

We cannot, then, find in an examination of the processes and results of different forms of education, related to different purposes, any unambiguous and universally accepted principles, nor a verification of any hypothesis which will be convincing to those who do not accept as ultimate the view of the relative values of the activities of life on which that hypothesis is based. At first sight there may seem to be agreement. We are all ready to acclaim Rousseau when he says "To live is the trade I would teach him,"<sup>1</sup> or to accept the more modern formula that through life education trains for life. But immediately a definite meaning is given to 'live' and 'life' the unanimity vanishes, and we find we are as far as ever from an unquestioned principle. The agreement was only superficial and verbal; the difference remains real and fundamental. From its very nature as purposive human effort education is essentially teleological, and until there is universal acceptance of one and the same end, it is hopeless to expect a real consensus of opinion as to the means, and evidently useless to seek unquestionable principles by an inductive examination of actual educative practice.

Leaving, then, the work of the educator, may we hope to reach ultimate principles by investigation of the other factor in the process—the young who are being educated? That we have here something more analogous to the facts of the physical world is obvious. But the analogy is not at all perfect. The physical facts are essentially unaffected by human action; man's purposes make no change in their nature. But the only young people available are evidently those who are being educated under one or other principle; that is to say,

<sup>1</sup> *Émile*, liv. i.



whose lives are being determined to some extent by educative purposes. Even here, then, we cannot escape from the same confusion of purposes which balks the other line of attack. Nor could we reach any ultimate purpose were it not so, for no purpose could be found in facts in which no purpose is embedded.

In short, as no process which is not teleological is, in any rational sense of the word, educative, it follows that the one true theory of education can never be reached inductively from the facts of education, whether they be examined from the side of the educator or from that of the educated. Now, as in the time of Aristotle, it must be granted that there is no theory of education so demonstrably true that it must needs be accepted by all competent thinkers on the subject.

But, granted that we cannot inductively so determine the end that all educators will consciously seek to promote the same evaluation of the activities of life, may it not at least be hoped that a doctrine of means may be worked out, in which each educator may find help and guidance in attaining his own preferred end? Such a doctrine would have three main branches—the efforts of the educator, the possible responses of the educated, and the relations between the educator and the educated that determine which of the possible responses of the latter are actualized.

No one will deny that in all these directions we have some knowledge, or that in all of them that knowledge is deficient both in fullness and in precision. But where knowledge has entered it can advance. There is here, then, a vast field for enquiry, and one which, if properly cultivated, may be expected to yield a copious harvest. But success in the work depends upon a clear recognition

of its difficulties, and of the limitations of its scope. Such limitations cannot be positively laid down beforehand, but negatively it may be pointed out that a vast amount of time and labour may be wasted in the accumulation of records utterly worthless because made by those whose pertinent knowledge and insight are not sufficient to apprehend truly what the facts really are, or what is their bearing on the problem in hand.

Assuming that the end is determined, and so putting it on one side for the present, it is evident that the problem of means is that of the influence of educative agents upon those who are to be educated. It is, thus, essentially psychological. But its basis is not to be found simply in the psychology of child-life as it would unfold if left to itself to react spontaneously upon its physical and human surroundings. Its problems are concerned with influences intentionally brought to bear so as to modify and determine that natural growth. It is a psychology of interaction, and therefore must take account of the spiritual life of the educator as well as that of the educated, and must so understand the relation between them that they are seen as correlative factors in one process. What is commonly known as 'child-study' can, then, by itself only indirectly throw light upon the practical problems of education. It seeks to know more exactly the whole spiritual life of the developing human being, and in that way it contributes much that is valuable. But it does not confine itself to the child's response to educative efforts, nor, when those efforts come into its purview, does it consider more than the child's reaction to them. It is thus at once more extended in scope, and more limited in analysis, than a full psychology of educational means demands.

Consequently, if the results of investigation into child psychology be taken simply and without enquiry as basis for educational theory or practice, distorted doctrine and mischievous practice are likely to result. It must be borne in mind that education is intended to be formative, and that in all formative work the nature of the agents and their effect on the material to be formed are as essential items of knowledge as is the nature of that material itself.

Further, all sides of the enquiry are faced by all the difficulties of psychological investigation. We are really in the position that our knowledge of the forces we are to bring to bear, and of the results they may effect, is very insecure, and little better than more or less intelligent guess-work. Our knowledge of ourselves is not intuitive, and though it is direct yet, even in its most complete form, it is imperfect, fragmentary, and marred by various forms of self-deception. Of the spiritual reality of others we are directly aware: we can feel ourselves in close and sympathetic accord, or in instinctive dissonance, with them. But of the actual content of their thoughts, of the desires and aspirations which govern their lives, our knowledge is indirect. They are manifested in various forms of bodily action and behaviour, and these alone are open to the direct observation of others. From them the contents of the spiritual life have to be inferred, and all such inference is ultimately based on analogy with what we believe of our own spiritual lives. Evidently, the extent of the relevancy of this to the spiritual life we are studying through its means cannot be exactly determined. Especially when the life we are trying to understand differs from our own in important points—such as age,

sex, social atmosphere—are we liable to err in our conclusions, even with individuals we know best. Nor are such errors to be eliminated by generalization, for we have no grounds for assuming that they are such as negative each other. As has been said, such knowledge is not unattainable. To assert that would be to deny the possibility of any understanding of others, and, consequently, of all human intercourse. That insight into the general laws of human life and of human development is slowly increasing is true. That it can ever attain absolute certainty is, at best, problematical. And, whatever want of certitude attaches to knowledge of those laws attaches of necessity to the principles of educative means based upon them.

The first essential then of an investigator into such educational questions is as complete and accurate a knowledge as he can gain of the springs and checks of his own spiritual activities. Until this is attained his objective enquiries into the mental lives of others have no claim to be accepted as what he assumes them to be. And, evidently, there can be no safe inference as to the action of the educator's spiritual life on that of the educated until the forces operative in both are apprehended with tolerable accuracy. The task is not hopeless, for the simple reason that the desired knowledge is, to various extents, implicitly held in a practical form by all of us. We call it tact. The difficulty is not so much the practical one of exerting influence on others, as the theoretical one of making explicit the principles implicit in such exercise of influence, so that they may be a general guide. That is why we want a theory of education at all. The means of influence which we find successful with one may be quite ineffec-

tive with another. That is the defect of empirical knowledge, possessed only in the form of practical skill: we cannot be sure when and in what circumstances it is rightly applicable.

The general intercourse of life has always cultivated such practical knowledge, and in many cases to a degree of great effectiveness. From thought on this general experience, has been developed such theory of educational means as we possess. Qualitatively it is of considerable extent and definiteness. But it does not show that quantitative precision which the physical sciences aim at attaining. In those sciences absolute agreement by competent observers is required, and, sooner or later, attained; in them hypothetical laws can be brought to the test of fact and verified, modified, or rejected, and here again agreement is rightly assumed to be both possible and necessary. It may not be reached at once, but the way to it is plain: it is through precise apprehension of effects, and comparison of these with the results calculated as the necessary outcome of the assumed laws. The whole process involves the application of exact units of measurement, independent of the idiosyncrasies of the observer. By experiment—or observation under carefully prepared and exactly known and measured conditions—the application can be made more and more precise.

To attempt to apply the special methods of physical science to the determination and measurement of the spiritual life is an attractive idea. Were it possible, it would appear that not only would our psychology become more exact, but that the uncertainties of the theory of educational means would be continuously reduced, till, perhaps, they would vanish away. No wonder that

many enthusiastic workers have taken up the task. Undoubtedly the general inductive method of observation, hypothesis, deduction and verification of results, is equally applicable to psychical as to material facts; to questions of will as to questions of gravitation. So long as this method is applied with due regard to the special nature of spiritual life, the enquiries undoubtedly promise well. But in so far as differences of fundamental importance are ignored, the results obtained are likely to be illusory.

Now, the assumption that physical methods can be applied in their fullness to the investigation of the spiritual life ignores such a difference. All students of the material world agree with Herschel's assertion that numerical precision is the soul of physical science. Such precision is always in view—is always attainable, even in cases in which it is not yet attained. But the preliminary question whether such precision is a concept applicable to the spiritual life again leads us to ultimate philosophical divergencies. Evidently, all that can be measured by physical means are physical things and energies, to which physical units can be applied. Unless, then, it be assumed that there is an exact correlation, even to the smallest quantitative variation, between spiritual life and the kinds of sensibility and bodily activity—generally speaking, muscular contractions—which can be measured by instruments of precision, the results of such measurements cannot be accepted as throwing light on mental life.

On this assumption, however, many investigations have been made. Their results have shown no general agreement either among themselves or with common experience. For example, attempts have been made to

estimate the amount of fatigue by measuring the distance at which two slight impressions of points of pressure on the skin can be distinguished as double, assuming increase of distance to be correlated with increase of fatigue. But Claparède records such tests on school children at Berne which yielded the remarkable results that the amount of fatigue at 5 p.m., after seven hours of school work, was exactly the same as at 8 a.m., before that work began, and that after a whole night's rest there was greater fatigue than after the mid-day interval of two hours.<sup>1</sup> Other measurements taken during school hours, however, "generally show a stronger fatigability in the afternoon," though investigators are not agreed as to whether two hours' work in an evening is tiring.<sup>2</sup>

Sometimes, then, the results of those methods agree with universal experience though they seem to add nothing to it, but at other times they appear in flat contradiction to it. It is not surprising that they are falling into disrepute among experimental workers. Schulze tells us: "The indirect methods were introduced by Mosso, who presupposed that muscle power diminished with the decrease in mental ability. If that were true, decrease in mental ability could be determined by the ergograph which measures muscle power. This hypothesis has been proved to be false. Muscle power does not decrease in proportion to mental power. It, therefore, cannot be used as a measure of mental power. There are cases where decrease in mental ability leads to increase in muscle power and vice versa.

"Many experimenters made use of tests of the spatial threshold with the aesthesiometer, going from

<sup>1</sup> *Experimental Pedagogy*, translated by Louch and Holman, p. 219.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 259.

the supposition that in a state of mental fatigue a judgment of distance must be more inaccurate than in a state of mental freshness. This method also led to negative results.

“It does not seem necessary to continue the list of indirect methods. We must, therefore, give up the idea of obtaining an exact measure, such as indirect methods had promised to give us.”<sup>1</sup>

It is well to relinquish methods which lead nowhere. But do not these negative results point beyond themselves to the falsity of the hypothesis of exact quantitative equivalence between mental and physical energy which they implicitly assumed? Whatever theory of the relation of mind and body is held, it would seem that only the crudest form of materialism could justify such an assumption. If the spiritual be, in every intelligible sense, a delusion, and mental life merely a reflexion of neural processes, then it might seem admissible to try to measure these through various forms of muscular contraction. But on any other theory the assumption appears quite gratuitous. Even the doctrine of a thorough-going parallelism between the spiritual and the neural does not involve the assumption that similar modes of measurement are applicable to the two. Even if it be granted that every mental experience is accompanied by a neural activity, and, conversely, that every neural excitation has its correlative disturbance in consciousness, it does not follow that the two are rigidly related in amount. We know, moreover, that no such relation exists between the amount of physical stimulus and that of nerve discharge. In a state of nervous irritability a very small stimulus, such as a slight sudden

<sup>1</sup> *Experimental Psychology and Pedagogy*: translated by Pinter, pp. 316-317.



noise, may lead to a violent nerve discharge, while in a normal state of health the nervous reaction would be inappreciable, if not absent. Obviously, on any theory of interaction between mind and body the assumption of exact quantitative equivalence is even more baseless. If such theories of the spiritual life as those of M. Bergson are true, the hypothesis of parallelism must itself be so profoundly modified as to be really overthrown. If the spiritual life has creative energy it is difficult to see what justification can remain for the assumption of a quantitative equivalence of physical and spiritual forces. Lastly, it may be urged that the hypothesis of such equivalence is open to the fundamental objection that it is not only unverified but unverifiable.

It is evident, then, that inferences from the ultimate external result to the amount of the primary spiritual energy cannot be accepted as elements in an unassailable theory. They can, at most, be recognized, and that with reserve, as indicating a more or less probable tendency.

Indeed, the idea of exact numerical assessment of spiritual energies seems not only unjustified, but actually opposed to all we know directly of our own lives. No one can say, in any but a figurative sense, that at one time he was twice as angry, or twice as much in love, or even twice as tired, as at another time. We may know that one desire is stronger than another, and may find verification of our estimate in our conduct, or in the difficulty we experience in restraining ourselves from following its lead, but we can establish no numerical scale of degrees of strength. Indeed, so long as we keep our thoughts fixed on the spiritual alone the very idea of units and exact measurement appears as inappli-

cable. Our judgements of quantity are all vague, and even so do not always agree with those of people around us, as when Sir Anthony Absolute, in a rage with his son, who is perfectly calm, cries "Can't you be cool like me?"

Not only is numerical precision in statement out of reach in psychological investigation but a further obstacle to scientific assurance is found in the fact that human beings cannot be sampled as can physical phenomena. As Mr. Graham Wallas says, "Every man differs quantitatively from every other man in respect of every one of his qualities."<sup>1</sup> No conclusions drawn from even the most careful observations of one set of individuals can, then, be accepted as more than indications of probability when we deal with another set, and can never be regarded as *à priori* applicable at all to any particular individual. The 'typical' or 'average' child or man is a mere symbol in a formula, and a symbol having no determinable affinity with any actual human being. Nor has this only a practical bearing. By itself it makes it impossible that in education—as in all else that regards man's spiritual life—such exactness, precision, and certainty, can be attained in the statement of general laws as would reduce the whole process to a mechanical system in which the outcome of any particular combination of forces could be confidently calculated.

Quantitative knowledge of mental processes cannot, then, attain numerical precision, and cannot be held generally applicable to individuals. Yet that all quantitative results are out of reach is disproved by the fact that we do continually make quantitative estimates which are broadly justified by experience. We judge

<sup>1</sup> *Human Nature in Politics*, p. 130.

one man to be abler than another, just as we judge him to be healthier, though neither health nor ability can be measured in units universally applicable to such forms of existence. So, too, every teacher mentally arranges his pupils in a rough order of mental power. Behind such judgements stand many records of school work well or ill done, and these of necessity tend to make the judgement narrowly scholastic. The estimates are not based wholly upon them, for school intercourse gives many data which cannot be tabulated. Still, so far as the records of work agree with this wider general estimate they may be taken as a rough index of power, and they are evidently applicable to new pupils, and so help to place them from the beginning. Much attention is being paid to this question with the aim of finding simple tests of sufficient scope and variety to class broadly the mental power of those submitted to them, and the attempt is both hopeful of considerable success and full of promise for school organization. Not only may such tests help in rightly placing new pupils in a school, but in determining the kind of school to which a pupil should be sent. Examinations are, of course, intended to be such tests, but they are far too narrow in their mental incidence, even when that incidence is not fundamentally wrong. Scientific enquiry aims at providing something which will do more surely and more fairly what examinations so largely fail in doing; something which has greater certitude than the results of intercourse, and does not demand the delay intercourse necessitates.

The results of satisfactory tests applied to a large number of individuals may be expected to group themselves in a roughly conical form—what Professor Karl

Pearson calls an "observation frequency polygon." The greater number would cluster round a kind of mean, and the number of deviations either by excess or by defect would roughly be inversely proportioned to their amount. For those at the bottom of the scale special scholastic provision is now made: for the most valuable material at the top the advisability of such provision is not adequately recognized.

It is by no means easy to determine in what 'general ability' consists, nor what is its relation to special ability. Yet its existence is generally accepted as certain. In whatever branch of human endeavour a man rises to eminence he would seem to possess power of concentration and persistence, width of mental grasp so as intuitively to sum up a situation, and a capacity for sound and rapid judgement. In that all these seem necessary to any form of mental excellence they may be spoken of as 'general' ability. But that any individual who has attained eminence in one direction could under different conditions have been equally successful in any other mode of life seems most unlikely. Simple experience can, obviously, never decide. It can never show us whether Napoleon could have written *Hamlet*, or Shakespeare conquered at Marengo. But in the extreme position that the 'hero' is by nature simply a hero in blank and quite indifferent to the form of his heroism is implied the doctrine that life is wholly determined by circumstances, and this pressed to its logical conclusion would deny his difference from his fellows in quantity as well as in quality of spiritual endowment. This doctrine we shall examine later, and offer grounds for its rejection.

At the same time it may be suggested that it is not

unlikely that the strength of determination towards one particular kind of excellence is generally proportioned to its absolute amount, and that the more removed an individual is from being a genius, the greater is the adaptability of his mental powers, so that he may do very well in any one of a fairly wide range of occupations. This is unlikely ever to reach indifference so long as any mental power exists at all, for here come in questions of temperament. A particular boy who may be trained about equally well in many forms of practical work may fall far below a corresponding standard in any form of intellectual work. Tests of ability, therefore, should be sufficiently varied to cover bias towards each of the great classes of activity, so as not to rank simply on a one-sided estimate. It should further be remembered that the conclusions drawn from such tests are no more than plausible hypotheses which the actual work of school and of life will verify or disprove.

On the analogy of the physical sciences it is attempted to avoid by analysis the difficulties due to individuality. In physical experiment the more or less perfect isolation of one particular form of energy gives a result which may be corrected for other forces known to be in operation, because the mode of interaction of physical forces is known and is open to measurement. For example, the amount of friction which in any given case interferes with the perfect exhibition of the law of inertia can be reduced to a minimum, and this can be calculated both in amount and in direction. But there is no corresponding mode either of isolating forms of mental energy or of compounding their results. Attention, for example, cannot be examined by itself, for as a separate form of spiritual energy it has no existence,

and the way in which it is modified by other phases both of the spiritual and of the physical life, and the extent of such modification, elude all attempts at exact analysis. We can seldom secure a correct enumeration of operative forces, to say nothing of a comparative quantitative estimate which even approximates certainty. As Mill long ago pointed out, the co-existence in every actual piece of life of what we are pleased to style mental elements, or forms of spiritual energy, is more analogous to the combination of chemical elements in a compound substance than to the composition of mechanical forces.

There is the added difficulty that analysis of mental life is largely arbitrary and wholly theoretical. If we seem to have got an element by itself it turns out to be something very different from what we mean by the same name in actual life. For example, investigations are conducted on 'memory' by the learning to repeat series of nonsense syllables or of numbers. What light can such enquiries throw on the power to use past experiences in dealing with present circumstances? In that power the retention of the past is much more often seen in an intelligent tendency to think and act than in that of the recall of particular experiences. And when it does take the latter form, the experiences are never disconnected, unrelated, and meaningless. What is really being tested in these experiments is the effect of repetition on the formation of physiological habit, not memory as a force in the intelligent spiritual life. The man who has a good 'memory' in the former sense, indeed, is likely to have a very poor one in the latter—and that is the only sense in which the power of retention is of any importance in life or in education. To fill

one's life with the trivial is a most effective means of hindering the development of intellectual power.

The same is, of course, true of every other form of mental energy to which a distinctive name has been given. Their existence as separate 'faculties,' able to function independently, if not in isolation, has been rejected from psychological doctrine as untrue to fact and contradicted by more exactly analysed experience. Does not the attempt to observe and measure them in isolation assume this very independence? There is, indeed, this difference, that there seems to be no intelligible limit to the possible number of these new faculties. Yet, without artificial isolation no imitation of the methods of physics is possible; and such attempted isolation is worse than futile because it profoundly modifies the power which is to be examined. No matter how carefully results obtained under such conditions are noted, the combination of them in the explanation of even the simplest piece of actual spiritual life must remain purely and arbitrarily hypothetical.

From the standpoint of education, too, all such psychological enquiries labour under the disadvantage of being one-sided. They attempt to gain precise knowledge of the workings of the minds of the persons who are being experimentally observed. But they do not touch the other two equally essential sides of the educational problem, for the tests they apply have small relation to the actual educative intercourse of life. The knowledge they attain is of mental life under artificial conditions. The mental processes observed in a psychological laboratory are very different from those with which the teacher has to deal in school, or the parent in the home. "The mind as observed in the psychological laboratory

is a chloroformed and decapitated mind ; the ideal subject allows his will to be suspended and his emotions temporarily removed. In the school, however, our subjects...are in full possession of all their faculties. Laboratory results will no longer enable us to predict their behaviour. Hence most of the problems hitherto investigated solely in university laboratories must be reinvestigated in the schools before the results can be appropriated with confidence for the theory and practice of education." Further, "the child to whom we propose to apply our knowledge is primarily a tangle of impulses and emotions. Yet the psychology we know is...a cognitive or intellectualistic psychology... We have innumerable studies of tests of intelligence ; but scarcely a single study concerned with tests of temperament and character, or, their innate sources, instinct and emotion." <sup>1</sup>

The nearer investigations keep to the concrete point of view, the more fruitful are they likely to be for a theory of educational practice. Investigations into such matters as the relative effectiveness of various methods of teaching particular subjects, of stimulating particular powers, interests, and tastes, of curbing definite faults and developing definite merits, may not attain a specious appearance of exactness of quantitative statement, but the results they do give are real and directly pertinent.

In reaching even them caution is necessary in drawing general conclusions. The reaction of different children to the same influence must be distinguished, and these divergencies themselves point to further enquiries as to whether on their basis a grouping round types of sufficient accuracy for the collective dealings to which schools

<sup>1</sup> Cyril Burt : *Paper read before the Teachers' Training Association, Mar. 21, 1914.*



are, of necessity, largely confined may not be possible. The question of differences of treatment of such groups again verges on the disputed realm of ends, but, perhaps, not so closely as to place a wide general agreement beyond hope.

In a word, we urge that educational investigation has aims quite other than those of psychological experiment, and that, as a consequence, it should use different means. Always the whole process should be observed, and not simply the reaction of the persons who are being educated. Processes which are not cognate to the educative influences of actual life are in themselves of no educational interest, and the attempt to make inferences from them to actual educative processes is in its essence fallacious. The problems of education are not those of psychology, for they are always those of a conjoint teleological process, and not those of the natural workings of individual minds. So, though well-established results of psychological enquiries may throw light on one of the aspects of educational investigation, and thus give valuable hints, they cannot be safely translated at once into educational terms, or even be accepted as educational facts. It may be suggested that the neglect of such considerations can but lead to the elaboration of much false theory of educational practice, the waste of much valuable time and effort, and the obscuring of the real issues—that is, the nature and aims of the whole process of education.

Further, it must be remembered that the traditional standpoint of psychology has been individualistic, and though the enormous task of investigating the psychology of communities and of the action of the common mind on individuals has been begun, not much has been

yet accomplished. This, however, is an aspect of education of the greatest importance in practice, and without which, therefore, every theory of education must be imperfect. It is true that in the history of education we may find many examples of educative efforts directed towards the attainment of definite ends, sometimes deliberately chosen, often merely accepted as prejudices from tradition and current custom yet operative nevertheless, and we may judge the general success or failure of these to attain the end sought. But all enquiry into the reasons for success or failure takes us into the realm of social psychology, where we find that adequate definite knowledge is still wanting to us. And, of course, when we proceed to compare not only the relative success or failure in attaining the end sought of different methods of education in the past, but also their value for the progress of humanity, we can do so only by reference to one of the ultimate standards of life, as to which mankind has reached no universal agreement.

Whether, then, we seek the foundations of a theory of education in ultimate principles of evaluation of the activities of life or in exact knowledge of the working of actual educative efforts in the present and in the past, nowhere do we find universally accepted and indisputable doctrine. This by itself is not decisive against the claim of education to rank as a science. If by a science is meant a completed body of knowledge, then no sciences exist; for even the most perfect, such as mathematics and astronomy, continually advance and seek to advance. The claim of a body of knowledge to be termed 'scientific' depends on the possibility of sure advance in systematization, rather than on the point which that advance has reached. Nobody doubts the existence of

a science of medicine despite the obvious imperfections of the body of knowledge it includes. Medicine, indeed, resembles education in the uncertainty both of its definite aim and of the employment of means, and knowledge of human physiology is in many respects as uncertain as is that of human psychology, from which, indeed, it borrows freely in its treatment of neural processes. If, then, we may speak of a science of medicine we may analogically claim the potential existence of a perfect science of education. We can conceive of a complete body of doctrine of educative means affiliated to a universally accepted end, based on exact knowledge of human intercourse, and continually verified by the test of educative practice. Such a doctrine, indeed, would be only a doctrine of tendencies, for in education we are concerned not with the invariable laws of the physical world but with the living realm of spiritual realities, and, whatever view be taken as to the ultimate nature of the soul of man, no one is likely to deny that the results of influences upon it cannot be calculated with precision.

The more clearly we conceive the possibility of such a science, however, the more vividly do we recognize how far the present state of our knowledge falls short of its realization. Yet, to doubt of the possibility of advance towards it would be to ignore all the history of the past, and, in the teeth of experience, to question the possibility of human progress. That approach may be made towards perfect agreement as to the ultimate nature of life and the evaluation of its activities is, indeed, matter of hope rather than of prevision. The day when these essentially metaphysical questions will be settled by the agreement of all com-

petent thinkers is certainly not within measurable, even if it be within conceivable, distance. Till then there will be as many interpretations of the aim and purpose of education as there are of the true functions of man and the real nature of his life. Doubtless, to each thinker his own theory will appear impregnable; but he will win as disciples only those whom he can persuade to agree with him as to the meaning of life and the relative values of its activities.

That, from the point of view of human perfectibility, this is an evil is not clear, so long as it be clearly recognized. The frank discussion of different opinions is the only way mankind has discovered both of making individual views precise and clear, and of either rejecting what on such critical examination is found to be untenable or of modifying what is seen to err by excess or by defect. So that, though all may not come to agreement, yet all may come to see the relations of the various concepts to each other. Often, as a result, positions which at first sight had appeared incompatible are found to be really complementary. Though we do not clearly apprehend the end, yet the eye of faith may look forward to the ultimate completion of this process in the establishment of a truth wide enough and deep enough to gather into itself all that is true—and there is surely always something that is true—in all the views of their destiny which rational men have ever been able to take.

To ignore or to obscure differences which in our present stage of thought and knowledge do actually exist is, however, to oppose a very serious obstacle to advance. In a laudable haste to establish the claim of education to rank as a science, it seems to be becoming the fashion

to do this, and to speak of 'the' theory of education as if all competent thinkers were agreed on ultimate principles. This is altogether to be deprecated. It gives us expositions of practice based upon mutually destructive principles and so doomed to sterility, and discussions of novel systems and methods which never get below the surface. This is assuredly not good for advance towards the truth. By thoughtful and earnest examination and analysis of the main forces which education can use, with no attempt to cover differences of meaning by similarity of terminology, advance may be made; not otherwise.

The first step forwards would seem to be a frank and explicit recognition that on the most fundamental question of aim agreement is not yet possible. The same ultimate end will not be sought in all educative efforts, and in consequence, the same emphasis will not be placed on the various educative means.

Next in importance, it may be urged, is an equally definite recognition of the differences between a science of education and the physical sciences. The latter are speculative and abstract, the former is normative and concrete. The laws of the physical sciences are independent of the use to which man may turn his knowledge of them; those of education are sought only that they may be applied, and they have to be sought in activities in which they are operative, either as consciously sought aims or as prejudices born from tradition and custom. They are, hence, doubly hypothetical. There is not only the causal hypothesis: If so and so be done, a certain kind of result may be expected; but also the teleological hypothesis: If such and such an end be desired then so and so should be done. A complete

theory of education would build up a system of hypotheses of the former kind in such a way that the combination of all their results would give the content of the purpose which is the antecedent of the latter.

This brings us to the greatest difference of all between the physical sciences and education. The former are abstract, for each is concerned with one aspect of existence; but the latter is concrete through and through. This must be so, or it could not be truly directive of practice, and it is for the sake of practice we seek to build it up. It must take account of all forms of human activity and feeling, of their natural results, and of the value of such results in promoting or in marring the form of existence which is accepted as most desirable. Thus, the ultimate end is concrete, and the dependent laws of action must be many and varied.

It is just here that we find the possibility of safe advance even without preliminary agreement as to the ultimate end, provided that the relation of all we learn to such an end be not ignored. The hypothetical laws of educative means—If so and so be done, such and such a kind of result may be expected—can be investigated as cases of natural causation. That a life is influenced in a certain way by a certain agency may be clearly evidenced by activities of the general nature of which there is no doubt. That the influence is strong or weak relatively to the cognate activity of the life affected may also be established with some degree of certainty. At present it does not seem safe to go further in assertion, and it may be suggested that till the whole field has been well covered in this way there is little call to attempt to go further.

From knowledge so gained empirical laws of the operation of spiritual forces may in time be formulated of much greater certainty, and with much greater precision, than is possible at present. So is being gathered the materials for a theory of educative means—a kind of inchoate natural science of education. Such knowledge can only be systematized into a real science of education—a doctrine of the fundamental nature of a teleological process—by being related to a definite end or purpose. In such relation the elementary laws combine, each in a manner and with a strength determined by that purpose.

Again, then, it appears that as bodies of systematic doctrine there must be as many theories—or sciences—of education as there are accepted ends. But it also appears that these doctrines largely embrace the same elements, though related in various ways. These subordinate elements may be crystallized into *axiomata media*—principles which guide practice by setting forth what results given educative forces may be expected to attain, but which do not decide anything about the relative desirability or undesirability of such results. Such principles may lay down, as the result of knowledge attained into the actual working of life and its susceptibility to various kinds of influence, general modes in which spiritual energy may be stimulated and guided.

Even so, only a wide and general validity must be credited to such principles of practice. Like all theoretical statements they refer to the usual, and their aim is to extend that reference to the universal. But the nature of the case precludes this. An educational theory which took account only of the forces brought to bear by the educators would be so one-sided as to

be false. Allowance must be made for various hindrances to the smooth working of the laws of educational effort, and these hindrances cannot be brought under a formula ; for individuality cannot be reduced to rule nor personality to measure. A theory which ignores this can only be put into practice imperfectly, and that with the disastrous results which cannot but attend the carrying into practice of false theories.

Though such a theory can indicate only general forms of educative effort, it is none the less of considerable practical value. To grasp general principles vitally, so that they influence our activities even unknown to ourselves, is to apply them fruitfully. Especially is this true in our dealings with our fellows. These are effective in proportion as they are the spontaneous outcome of our personalities, and not the artificial—or, at any rate, exceptional—result of special conscious effort. He educates the most effectively who can take his principles for granted, because by previous meditation he has absorbed them into his own soul, and has by criticism secured that they are both clear and consistent. He fails the most egregiously who has no such body of consistent principles, and whose influence at one time neutralizes that which he exercises at another ; yea, even though he have much skill as an instructor and a magnetic personality. The magnetic personality is, indeed, when not inspired by clear principles a positive evil to those who are influenced by it, for it transfuses into their souls that very uncertainty as to the high things of life which detracts from its own greatness and nobility.

This leads us again to the ultimate nature of the question of ends. The laws of practice can only become



fundamental principles of education when they are synthesized into a harmonious body of doctrine by being related to a definite conception of end. It may be possible to agree that in such and such ways certain forms of spiritual activity may be evoked, but whether it is well to evoke them, and, if so, in what relative strength and with what purposive reference they should be called forth, can only be answered on the assumption that one form of life is higher and better than another.

To meditate and decide upon the ultimate questions of life is, then, the very first requirement of a true educator. Ill as it is for anyone to play with life it is infinitely worse for those who deliberately undertake to be directive influences in the lives of those younger than themselves, with whose spiritual oversight they are charged. That the common details of life in family and in school tend to make parents and teachers—the two greatest classes of educators of the young—lose hold of principles to which they would yet give an academic consent cannot be denied. Well is it, then, to turn aside at times to ask seriously “What mean ye by this service?” and to govern our educative activities by the answer we can conscientiously give.

If, then, we would at once be accurate in our use of terms, and avoid both ambiguity and fallacy, we must confess that there neither exists at present, nor, so far as can be seen, is likely to exist in any proximate future a theory of education of universally accepted validity. There are, on the contrary, many theories, each hypothetically dependent on certain assumptions which are themselves primarily concerned with life, and secondarily with education as a training in life. Nor can such assumptions be excluded. If they are not

explicitly made in any exposition they are implicitly operative, and determine both the educational theory set forth and the practice which embodies that theory, at any rate in the emphasis laid on different aspects of the process. Nothing but confusion can result from an attempt to exclude them. Agreement in natural causal laws of human influence may blind us to the essential incompatibility of theories which assume as the aim of educative endeavour very different views as to the meaning of life and the relative values of its experiences, and which, though they use the same means, consequently use them so as to seek different results. The ultimate question is never how to train, but for what to train. Unless the former be consciously related to the latter the practical work of education can only be ineffective, and the theory which underlies that work incoherent and self-destructive.

The verification of theories of education—as of all other hypotheses—must be sought in practice. Here the approval or justification of the causal hypotheses of educative influence which form the material for a theory of educative means is direct and comparatively simple. Whether or no we approve a result, observation and experiment can determine whether any suggested means make for its attainment. But the determination of whether the kind of life sought as its result in the whole process of education is good or bad is matter both of faith and of judgement. Of faith primarily if a divine revelation of what is best for man be accepted, though the approval of the judgement must accompany the faith if it is to be a living influence ; of judgement primarily if man takes himself and his conscience as the ultimate measures of good, though, here too, faith that the end

represents the true line of human progress, and so will win increasingly general acceptance, must also be operative as a stimulating motive-force.

The first essential, then, in entering on the study of a theory of education is the recognition that its truth as a whole is relative to the truth of the view of life it embodies, and towards the realization of which it points the way. When this is clear the systematization of the educative means can be profitably undertaken, and all that is now known or may hereafter be learned as to the laws of educative influence and intercourse can be fitted into a coherent body of doctrine, the application of which will, at least, be the consistent direction of forces towards a definite aim, not the fortuitous application of them according to the caprice or exigencies of the moment, or in obedience to every new whim of educational fashion.

## CHAPTER II

### WHAT SHOULD BE THE END?

As all conscious training of the young is education, it is a constant process in all human communities. The race must educate its children, even though it be uncertain towards what ultimate goal it is training them, or be unconsciously assuming the validity of incompatible evaluations of the purposes and activities of life. As Herbart remarked: "Education has no time to make holiday now, till philosophical questions are once for all cleared up."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, to the ordinary man the discussions of philosophers seem but vain babblings. For him, 'common-sense' is sufficient, and he does not recognize how largely this trusted guide of life is composed of prejudices and opinions accepted without question because they are current in the society in which he lives.

So long as thinkers are not agreed on ultimate principles it is evident that no thorough-going consistency can exist in the general mass of received opinions. For every philosophical theory of life has a basis in the facts of life, and, consequently, a reflexion in common opinion. The inconsistencies which thus lurk in common opinion remain hidden from most minds simply because no attempt is made to range them under one ultimate principle. There are maxims and proverbs

<sup>1</sup> *Science of Education*, trans. by Felkin, p. 108.

referring to special classes of circumstances and special kinds of action. But they have been accepted independently of each other ; they have never been collated, and each is called into activity as external circumstances dictate. So, opinions are confused and conduct is vacillating : life is governed by expediency, not by principle. Sometimes, indeed, this is so markedly the case that it seems impossible to say that the life has a conscious ultimate end at all.

This would be unfortunate enough if the want of apprehension as to what life should mean affected only the individual thus careless of his own welfare. But "no one liveth to himself alone," in this any more than in other respects. Our lives affect the lives of others in proportion to the closeness of our relations with them. Especially close is the relation of educator and educated. Especially unhappy, then, are the effects of the want of a clear and dominating purpose in the life of any educator. As Richter says : "The end desired must be known before the way. All means or arts of education will be, in the first instance, determined by the ideal or archetype we entertain of it. But there floats before common parents, instead of one archetype, a whole picture-cabinet of ideals, which they impart bit by bit and tattoo into their children."<sup>1</sup>

This is true not only of parents, but equally so of all teachers who have given no careful thought to the meaning and purpose of their work. They may pride themselves upon being 'practical,' and contemning 'theory.' But a practice which is not oriented towards a clearly conceived end—that is, which is not inspired by a living theory—can be only of that uncertain and

<sup>1</sup> *Levana*, p. 106.

vacillating character which meets each situation as it arises by what seems expedient at the moment. That is, indeed, a strange exaltation of the 'practical' which condemns practice to be largely sterile and ineffective because its efforts at one time negate those made at another.

Without countenancing the absurd claim that conscious educative influence is all-powerful in forming the young, it must be acknowledged that it has considerable power, and that the unintended formative influence of the same educators is often yet more potent. So that the uncertainty of mankind about the really great questions of life grows out of the educative environment, and must continue unabated until all conscious educative effort is dominated by an explicit and self-consistent purpose. Doubtless, the various demands of life impose upon all who would train for life many subordinate purposes, some small and immediate, others great and far-reaching. It is because these so often act independently of each other, and are followed without regard to their relative worth and weight, that so much of actual education is uncertain in aim, and less effective in its operation than the efforts devoted to it deserve.

The first thing needful for success is a clearly conceived theory. Such a theory must lay down explicitly, though in most general terms, the kind of end to be sought, and, in relation to that end, examine and try all suggested means. An investigation of means is not enough; for, as has been urged, the results of such an investigation are inchoate till they are related to this or that theory of the end. The practical work which is inspired by a real insight into the values of life is itself living and inspiring: that which is guided by rules and maxims for

dealing with certain types of situations, but which is animated by no such living faith, can be but dead and mechanical. The more highly we estimate the value of good practical educative work, the more earnestly we shall desire that it be good as the artist's work is good, not merely as that of the house-painter is successful.

In a sense, practice *cannot* be separated from theory, for every piece of practical work is capable of being generalized, and, therefore, embodies a general idea. The next piece of work may embody a conflicting general idea, and so on, and so on. The work as a whole is then devoid of explicit theory because it is full of implicit theories, and these are contrary the one to the other. The 'practical' man is not the man of no theory, but the man of many potential theories: but he has never thought them out, and so is unaware that they are really operative in his mind. They are the unrelated prejudices—some true, some false—which he has absorbed from the common mass of opinion about him.

We are by no means asserting that theory and practice are synonymous terms, nor that they are so indissolubly woven together that all educators should be equally proficient and equally interested in both. Some minds are naturally more inclined to speculation, others to effective action, and this holds in education as in other lines of human thought and endeavour. But we do urge that the practical educator should no more neglect and condemn theory than the scientific inventor would think of neglecting the results of the workers in pure science. Mechanical invention has made its great conquests because the practical workers have learnt from the speculative thinkers; have absorbed what these have established as true, and have set themselves deliberately

to utilize the laws of nature thus made manifest to them.

It would be a rash assertion indeed that there has been an equally revolutionary advance in education. That such educational appliances as schools and libraries have been multiplied is true ; that they have exercised more good influence than is credited to them by pessimistic observers we believe to be true also ; but that the spiritual lives of men have shown a development comparable in extent and importance to that of the mechanical means of production and communication cannot be maintained. We are profoundly convinced that only when the practical and the theoretical educator work together—the former guiding his practice by the truths established by the latter, the latter seeking always in the work of the former the tests of his hypotheses till he can mould them into the form of general truths—will the advance which all desire be made. The progress will be slow even then, and that just because agreement has not been reached as to the most fundamental principle of all—the ultimate end of the whole process. The most that it seems possible even to hope is that earnest and consistent efforts may be made to realize each ideal aim which, after all efforts at synthesis, still remains unresolved. Then comparative evaluation will be more possible than it is at present, when the work is nearly everywhere more or less vitiated by uncertainty of purpose.

Eucken well sums up the situation : “Education and instruction are especially affected by the difficulties that are engendered by the lack of a main tendency in life. . . . In conflict with one another we use up much power without making much progress. . . . We wish to improve



education, and yet we have not come to an understanding with regard to its ideals, its possibility, and its conditions. Education must be fundamentally different in character, according as man is regarded as a particular and exclusively individual being, or as a being in whom a new and universal life seems to emerge; according as he is only an elevated being of nature or in the highest degree possible a spiritual being; according as the higher proceeds from the lower gradually and surely after the manner of organic growth, or we must find a new starting-point and accomplish a revolution.”<sup>1</sup>

Without attempting to disguise the fact that unresolved antitheses as to the end of life do exist among the most earnest and competent thinkers, and holding most firmly that such divergencies must affect the theory and through that the practice of education, yet it seems possible to make some attempt towards minimizing the discordances they introduce. For people holding all these different views live together amicably, engage without undue friction in the ordinary avocations of life, and are effective members of the general community. Men are no longer ostracized because of their religious or philosophical beliefs. They are accepted and estimated according to their reputation, which is the opinion their known conduct causes others to form of their worth. So that, in some relation to all the current conceptions of man's highest good, there are intermediate principles of life which are generally accepted as valid, and which form the framework of the widest common life in which we share.

Of these education must take account, and it might seem plausible—as it certainly would be easy—to urge

<sup>1</sup> *Life's Basis and Life's Ideal*, trans. by Widgery, pp. 343-344.

that from the educational standpoint they may be accepted as ultimate. But this would be fallacious. It would assume that education is confined to that training which can be given in common to any number of individuals, and that it has nothing to do with the intimate personal life. For immediately we look below the widest community we find smaller communities—a whole hierarchy. And each has its special laws and principles, some particular to itself, and others which are more or less serious modifications of the more general principles of the wider community. So that the principles current in any given community do not form a consistent body of practical doctrine. Nor are they universally accepted by the members of that community. Some are rejected altogether by those who assume one estimate of life's values, others by those who hold an opposed view, while the relative emphasis laid on those which are nominally recognized by all can scarcely be the same in any two schools of doctrine. Nothing, we believe, is to be gained by ignoring such important actual differences.

On the other hand, much is to be lost by magnifying them. Many of the divergent views which are advanced as to the aim of education really relate only to some subordinate aim, and refer to some of these intermediate principles of life. On this lower plane they are, indeed, irreconcilable, but from the higher standpoint of a more comprehensive view of life's needs and activities they frequently appear complementary—each true in what it affirms though false in what it seems, explicitly or implicitly, to deny. Thus, by a process of analysis and synthesis the number of conflicting voices may be reduced. Could this be carried far enough the truth

must at last be found, and agreement on the great things of life be reached. For it must not be forgotten that on the evaluation of these there is but one truth, which is wide enough and deep enough to include all the partial truths which now divide mankind because they are taken for whole truths. When that far-distant point is reached human progress will be sure and rapid ; for it is error and ignorance, and the mistaken and false action to which they lead, that impede its course.

Man's spiritual life is of a complexity which has hitherto not yielded wholly to his power of analysis. Could it be seen clearly and truly in all its aspects and relations, in its origin and in its destiny, then the recognition of the nature of its highest good would be comparatively easy, and all partial expressions of it would be seen to be inadequate. Divergence of view as to what is man's highest good is possible only because our knowledge is fragmentary and our insight imperfect. The most opposed views as to life's issues which thinking men have advanced may be assumed to be true on their proper planes and in their right relations. Falsity comes in with exclusion: then partial truth is exalted into full truth, and one aspect of life given a dominance which a fuller knowledge would show it should not possess. To the extent to which we can see such unjustified limitations we may suggest a synthesis which would show that doctrines which are antithetical on a lower plane are really complementary on a higher.

The most evident of the antitheses of life is that between man's spiritual and his animal nature. Is man essentially a spiritual being whose earthly life is a constant struggle with an evil and recalcitrant body in which he is imprisoned? Or is the body the real man,

and is all that we call the mental life only a mode in which the nervous system functions?

According to the former view the ideal of life is asceticism. All bodily appetites, impulses, and pleasures, are at least suspect. Man advances towards perfection in the spiritual life in proportion as he becomes indifferent to all that pertains to the bodily life. Education must be watchful and repressive, for its function is to help to subdue all bodily impulses, and to form both the habit and the desire to repress the natural longings for earthly joys. Man is born evil, and the true work of this life is so to free the soul from sin by self-denial that it may pass purified through the gate of death into a higher eternal life. In the Brahman seeking Nirvana, and in some mediaeval ascetic saints, we see this theory of life put as fully as possible into practice.

On the other view, all the impulses with which man is born are good because they belong to his physical nature and their fit satisfaction yields pleasure. The function of the mental powers is to calculate how the greatest amount of gratification of desire can be obtained. To be comfortable is to be good, and prudence is the highest virtue. Self-restraint is justifiable only when a present joy would be likely to lead to a greater future sorrow. All men may not find satisfaction in the same kind of experiences, but personal satisfaction is the aim of life.

The former view is idealistic: it seeks man's happiness and perfection in the future, and imagines then a state far more blessed than any he has yet attained. The latter is naturalistic: it seeks happiness and perfection in the present life. If it be consistent it sets up no ideals, for to do so would be to detract from the pleasant

complacency of the present, in that it would inspire a feeling of dissatisfaction and unrest. Education in harmony with this doctrine is essentially precautionary. It would guard the child against mistakes in his physical life, but it would not otherwise interfere with the actions to which his impulses prompt.

So long as body and soul are regarded as essentially separate and different modes of existence, only a compromise between these views seems possible, and undoubtedly it is some form of such a compromise that most lives express. But compromises are devoid of guiding principle, and in education a compromise between these two views of life means an alternation of indulgence and repression, according to temporary expediency or even caprice.

When, however, this dualism is rejected, and it is recognized that the life we have to live, and for which education has to prepare, is one and indivisible; that experience is at once physical and mental; that the dynamic forces in life are spiritual activities functioning in a material environment and enabled so to function because of the bodily organism; then a reconciliation and synthesis—and not merely a compromise—becomes possible. Man's innate impulses result from the long continued experiences of his ancestors. Some are survivals from a primitive age and are antagonistic to social bonds which have been gradually developed during later times; others are of more recent origin and prompt to actions acceptable to current opinion. As the centre of all such promptings, there is the corresponding tendency to emotions and feelings which we judge bad or good. It is not that the body is wholly evil or wholly good, but that the whole life starts with dynamic forces,

at once spiritual and physical, making, some for what we regard as right, and others for what we regard as wrong. These manifest their presence before the child is able to form any moral judgement or to accept or reject any moral rules or principles. If they are allowed to find scope and exercise each draws into itself nutriment from the events of daily life, but if any particular mode of activity is generally prevented that innate force becomes weaker, at least relatively to others. It gets, as it were, crowded out of the active life, though that it is not destroyed is at times manifested unexpectedly when some novel situation gives it scope. Just as, on this synthetic view, the ideal of life is neither asceticism nor self-indulgence, but a fulfilment of function which demands at times self-denial but which yields also much satisfaction, so education is neither constant repression and direction nor the negation of all real control and guidance. The rule of synthesis is given by consideration of the functions to which life calls, and this involves study of the relations of the individual to all that exists.

Here we are brought face to face with the second great antithesis of life—that between the individual and his environment. Is each man essentially independent of his fellows and separate from them, so that his varying relations with them do not change or modify his real being? Or is his life throughout one of dependence on surroundings? Is the ideal of manhood the self-sufficing individual, or the constituent of society whose life is absorbed in the common life? Egoism and altruism are the two moral poles of this antithesis. In theory the former counts the rights and the good of others as of no great account in so far as they conflict with the

well-being of the self, while the latter holds self to be but as dust in the balance in comparison with the common good. It may be doubted whether any life was ever so consistently governed by either egoistic or altruistic principles that regard to others in the one case, or to self in the other, was entirely excluded ; but it is notorious that many have approached the former ideal, and a far smaller number the latter.

Each principle again appears defective immediately it is considered, for experience teaches that on the one hand we are all responsible persons, each with his own life to lead, and also that that life is in constant relation to others at innumerable points, or, in other words, that individuality and human relationships are inseparable.

Still, this does not take us beyond a compromise. Now we serve self, now others ; and, according to our temperament, the one or the other service is rare in our lives, determined probably by passing mood or by some extraneous circumstance, but in no sense by consciously accepted principle. Such a compromise can give no definite educative guidance, and evidently can only promote a similar spirit of expediency in those thus trained.

If a reconciliation is to be found, it must be sought in a deeper analysis of human experience and human needs ; for the true end of human life must be human life in its fullness and in its perfection. Such an analysis soon lays bare the truth that we live in essential inter-relations with both our human and our physical surroundings. We cannot conceive of ourselves apart from our thoughts, our desires, our knowledge, our estimates of value ; for they are the very material of our spiritual lives. But in all these we are what we are because we have been born and have lived

in a certain time and place, and among a society that has attained a certain stage of civilization and holds certain views and beliefs. These we insensibly receive into our minds in our intercourse with men, through the speech and acts which assume them. All life is social throughout. We seek our own good, and we derive the idea of what is good from our social circle, and in labouring to attain our end we are helped or hindered by others, we affect them for good or ill. A wholly individual morality is a contradiction in terms. It follows that goodness and wisdom are inseparable. It is want of insight into the real nature and conditions of good that leads to opposition and to failure, for the good is universal in that it is the perfection of human nature as such, the true ideal for all men. The more a man is truly good, the more he is truly wise, for the more he realizes that the lives of others are an essential part of his life, and that he lives his own life ever as part of the common life. As Mr. Bradley sums up the matter: "In short, man is a social being ; he is real only because he is social, and can realize himself only because it is as social that he realizes himself."<sup>1</sup> And, on the other hand, "Only by the will of its self-conscious members can the moral organism give itself reality."<sup>2</sup>

Similarly the inter-relation of our lives with our physical environment is not accidental and changeable at will, but essential and determinative. In thought we can separate the knowing and desiring mind from that which it knows and desires. But the separation is only in our analysis. The resolution of the antithesis of mental and physical life supplies the key to the resolution of that of self and its material environment. Spiritual

<sup>1</sup> *Ethical Studies*, p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 147.



activity acting on nothing is a contradiction in terms ; matter on which no spiritual activity can be exercised simply does not exist for us—is not part of our world. Our environment is the matter of our thoughts, our thoughts give the form in which we apprehend our environment.

Is, then, a scientific knowledge of the universe an adequate ideal purpose for human life and endeavour? This seems to be the creed of rationalism, or the theory that reason is adequate to the solution of all the problems of life. Now, reason cannot advance unless it assume as a postulate that law is universal and inviolable. But the only laws it knows are those of the physical universe. It can, then, only think of the spiritual life in terms of those laws, and hold that if fully known they would furnish a sufficient explanation of it also. In man, such laws are evidently primarily applicable to the functionings of the nervous system. It follows that the whole of these must be regarded as mechanically determined. Thus an account is given of the whole of the bodily life, and this must sufficiently cover the whole of the life of thought as well, unless some forces and laws unknown to physical science be assumed. It would seem, then, that a really consistent and thorough-going rationalism finds its logical goal in materialism.

Is, then, materialism the ultimate explanation of the world? To a critical analysis its inadequacy soon becomes apparent. It makes man's activity consist of reactions and interactions of irresistible forces acting in immutable laws. Man appears, indeed, to live, but what he calls life is in its essence one with the workings of inanimate nature. For some inexplicable reason some of these processes are accompanied by what we call con-

sciousness—thought, desire, volition, and the like. But this makes no difference to the course of things.

It is here that materialism breaks down. It fails to satisfy even the demands of that reason from which it springs, for its solution of the problem of human life omits to take account of one of its obvious factors. It is surely unreasonable to suppose that reason itself is a phantasmagoria ; that its very claim to decide on the nature and purpose of life is vain, because what we call our trains of thought and our conclusions are really nothing but shadows thrown by material processes which go on quite independently of the consciousness which accompanies them.

Materialism, therefore, fails to account for our intellectual life. But this carries with it the failure to explain the ultimate nature of the physical world. For, as has been seen, in our experience—of which materialism itself is a part—the concrete activity which exists is at once ourselves and our surroundings. It is human thought which assumes the laws which are operative in the physical world ; it is human ingenuity which brings those assumptions to the test of further human experience. The material construction of the universe, then, must be ultimately a spiritual construction, if human thought be a spiritual reality and not a shadow of material processes. But a spiritual construction can be a true account of a material universe only if that universe be itself the expression of a spiritual activity. Spirit can enter into spirit, and the laws discovered by spiritual activity must be themselves the manifestation of spiritual activity.

If, then, the position that ultimate existence is material be rejected it must be accepted that around and

beyond us is a spiritual existence which cannot be subsumed under physical laws and categories. So we are led back to the antithesis between the material and the spiritual with which we started. Now, however, it is extended from the brief and narrow life of the individual man to all time and all existence. It, therefore, presents to us the same desires and aspirations on a grander scale; and an adequate theory of human life and destiny must provide for their satisfaction. But no matter how completely science may succeed in accounting for the interaction of physical forces—yea, even if it could set before our reason arguments in which we could see no flaw to prove that the whole material universe has been thus explained—the yearnings of the heart remain unsatisfied. Materialism still fails as an ultimate theory; for such a theory must find the completion and perfection of man's nature in his relations to that greater life and power which surrounds him, and which animates and directs all things. A self-originated, self-contained, and self-sustaining, mechanism, making for nothing but its own conservation, devoid of all we call life, is not an object of love or of aspiration. But with a theory of spiritual existence—a fount of creative power—all is different. Man's relation to such existence is not limited by what he can prove on the assumption of fixed laws of the interaction of matter—laws which, he feels, do not touch the real springs of his own deepest life—but gives scope for hope and faith and love. So, in it, not our reason only, but the whole of our spiritual aspirations, can find fruition.

Of these spiritual needs the deepest is that the self should be carried out of the narrow limits of its immediate personal interests in love for what is deeper

and wider than it. Such loving aspiration is not centred in the gratification of merely personal desire ; it seeks not its own glory. Without it, there is no real reaching forward to an ideal ; for an ideal which is only a picture of the imagination, or a plan approved by reason, counts for but little in life. Love of what is beyond ourselves is the central spring of life, the invigorating spirit of purpose and effort.

Can all this be found in a 'religion of humanity'—a faith in the continuous progress of mankind towards human perfection, which is not merely a belief but a spring of action? To a few souls this may appear sufficient. They are content to find that immortality which man so naturally—if not universally and instinctively—longs for and expects, in the survival of the race and the annihilation of the individual. They unselfishly strive for all that they believe will make for human progress. But to most of us such an ideal is unsatisfying. We find little comfort or help in the thought of relation to an existence, wider it is true, but of the same faulty nature as our own ; for we cannot hide from ourselves that not all human faults are merely negative imperfections which progress may remove. Even a slowly improving humanity does not prove a sufficient inspiration for our efforts. We are apt to ask why the problematic improvement of future generations, equally ephemeral with our own, should be held a sufficient reason why we should deny ourselves what seems a present obvious and certain good or delight.

Nor is sufficient inspiration to be found in any abstraction, such as Kant's categorical imperative. A self-supporting law of duty, which gives no reason beyond itself why it should be obeyed and appeals to the

individual conscience for approval may commend itself to the reason, but can scarcely touch the heart. Moreover, putting on one side the notorious fact that the rulings of conscience are not uniform, there remains the question why conscience should be obeyed when it formulates its rules or enounces its decisions in harmony with its interpretation and application of the abstract law of duty. Conscience is no more intimate a part of myself than are the impulses it bids me control or even inhibit, so that justification of its claim to govern my life must be sought outside my life. Nor can we find an adequate basis by relating it to the common opinion around us. We should not feel it right to change our moral rules of life if we changed our residence to a country where other principles of conduct receive acceptance. Nor, indeed, can we say with certainty what the rules of conduct which are verbally current around us actually mean. Men differ in their interpretation of the terms in which they are expressed, even when they agree in accepting them in some sense. And, as we have seen, there is no unanimity in such acceptance. So, from the kaleidoscope of common opinion no clear ideal of life or sure principles of conduct can be drawn.

We must, then, seek the justification for rules of life and for efforts to live virtuously in a relation of conscience to an existing perfection of truth and goodness. And this relation must be one of the whole self, and not of reason only. In a word, it must be personal, for we cannot love a mere abstraction. Love needs a personal object, and its relations with that object are just as surely part of the warp and woof of life as are the more obvious relations to things and men to which science is restricted. This relation is of the essence of religion,

and so, in the attempt to analyse the needs of the spiritual life of man, we are led to the old position that religion is the ultimate bond which unites the whole ; for only in the religious relation of love can the deepest longings of the human heart be satisfied. In the words of an old writer : " Man was created, not for food, clothing, and habitation, not for difficult, hidden and troublesome knowledge, but for the desire to know God more truly, for a participation in eternity, and in His divine nature." <sup>1</sup>

Relation to God is the only way in which we can conceive the satisfaction of human aspirations, the completion of human knowledge, the sanctification of human life. Then " the ideal is an universal, because it is God's will, and because it therefore is the will of an organic unity, present though unseen, which is the one life of its many members, which is real in them, and in which they are real." <sup>2</sup> If this be accepted, and if it be agreed as a corollary that religion is the core of worthy human life, it follows that true education is, before all else, religious. This, of course, does not touch the question as to where and by whom such instruction in doctrine as may be regarded as a necessary part of a religious education should be given. Religious education is primarily concerned with an attitude of mind—a direction of the will and a trend of the emotions—and to this instruction of the intellect is auxiliary. Nothing but disappointment and failure can ensue from a confusion of the two questions of training or education and instruction, whether it be in religion, in morality, or in

<sup>1</sup> J. L. Vives : *de Tradendis Disciplinis*, trans. by Foster Watson, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> F. H. Bradley : *Ethical Studies*, p. 209.

general activity. It is because schools so often have made the confusion, and believed they were educating when they were merely instructing, that they have so frequently and for such long periods failed to meet the legitimate requirements of the community.

Here we are led to an educational antithesis which is an outcome of the differences of view as to what constitutes the perfection of man's spiritual life. Is education mainly concerned with intellect or with character? The analysis of the personal idealist may be imperfect, not only in ignoring or under-estimating the natural bodily life, but also in failing to recognize the value of some aspects of the spiritual life itself, in which his own temperament does not lead him to take delight. So he gives undue dominance to some other aspect. The will, the intellect, the emotions—each may be exaggerated, so that the highest good for man is found in individual freedom, which often shows as self-sufficiency and assertion; or in intellectual contemplation of ultimate truth; or in ecstatic absorption in love of the good and beautiful. Now, it would be absurd to deny that in each of these three directions a point much in advance of that reached by ordinary men has been attained by exceptional heroes, thinkers, and saints. Yet in each it does not seem difficult to see defects; indeed, the very brightness of the one set of qualities seems to throw the comparative lack of others into darker shadow. And, evidently, each implies at once a degree, and a one-sidedness, of development which are not common among men. Few can be heroes or philosophers or mystics, and, consequently, none of these by itself can give a complete and general aim for human life. The fact that individual perfection has been chiefly advocated

as the highest good for man by philosophers of intellectual temperament accounts for the predominantly intellectualistic character commonly associated with that perfection, so that human progress is found in increase of knowledge, and human greatness is measured by power of thought.

Such a view is naturally attractive to those whose occupation is teaching, so that in practice schools have generally regarded intellectual training as the essential aim of education, and often have taken little account of the moral quality of the matter through which that training was given. On the other hand, thinkers on the theory of education have, as a rule, taken the view of Herbart, that "the one and whole work of education may be summed up in the concept—Morality."<sup>1</sup>

Evidently here a reconciliation is needed. A compromise which gives intellectual training at one hour, and religious or moral training at another, does not meet the needs of the case. For in life intelligence and morality are not separable. Good intentions unguided by sound judgement lead mostly to disaster. A clear intellect uncontrolled by sound moral principles is a danger to the community, and may easily be a curse to its possessor. No doubt, nothing is more common than an attempt at such separation—religion for Sundays, and business for week-days—and the term 'business' is apt to cover, in a different sense from charity, a multitude of sins. A religious and moral education is religious and moral through and through, not because the subjects studied are all directly religious and moral in their content, but because they are studied in a religious and moral spirit. It is not meant simply that they are

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 57.



followed strenuously, but that they are so presented as to widen the mental outlook and to appeal to the higher spiritual aspirations—in a word, to help to form spiritual ideals. All this is religious and moral in the widest sense.

Necessarily, most of the time of the school is given to intellectual culture—that is its characteristic function in education. But that would be a very bad school which paid no regard to morality in conduct, and that would be a very imperfect education which was obtained only within the walls of a school. In home training the question of conduct must always loom larger than that of knowledge, and no arrangements can relieve the home of its primary responsibility in this respect. So far as it fails to fulfil its office the education of its children is imperfect, and, it may be, all other educative efforts are rendered abortive. Pestalozzi was profoundly right in putting forward the home as the very core of educative influence. Any public or private action which tends to obscure this in the minds of parents is antagonistic to education, and especially so when it is taken in the name of education. Further, in the church or religious organization to which the family belongs the main aim is religious, and religion is the only sure basis mankind has ever found for the moral life of the community. Hence, of the three main educative communities, two are primarily concerned with morality, and the third should make it the permanent undercurrent of its life.

Education, then, is more essentially the cultivation of character than the training of intellect. As Vives put it: "He who knows none of the arts but yet has a practical knowledge of virtue, and has formed and ordered his life by its rules, is so far from being blamed

that he is deserving of praise. On the other hand, he is worthy of ignominy and dishonour who is learned and instructed in human arts, but is destitute of virtue.”<sup>1</sup>

But morality, in the usual restricted and somewhat technical use of the term, is not the sole educative aim, just because such morality is not the whole of life. Much of our conduct is on the surface morally indifferent. To make a mistake as to the investment of one's money, or to advance and try to establish a false hypothesis in science, is not morally wrong ; nor are the opposites of these matters for moral commendation. Doubtless at a deeper level we may acknowledge a moral obligation to be thrifty and cautious, or to seek the truth, and in that sense there is a basis of morality in all conduct. To fulfil properly any of the functions of life demands, indeed, a moral purpose to do well what has to be done ; but it demands also an acquired knowledge and skill, relevant to the task to be performed. Education must endeavour to cultivate this knowledge and skill as well as to encourage the growth of right motives and good purposes. It is not merely the life which is good in intention, but the life that is also effective in action, that education should aim at securing.

This leads us to the consideration of the antithesis commonly assumed in the aims of intellectual training. Should it seek liberal culture or practical efficiency? So far is this antithesis sometimes pushed that a ‘liberal education’ is contrasted with a ‘utilitarian training,’ and the extreme advocates of the former seem to regard all that has a direct outlook on the practical affairs of life as actually opposed to true education. Thus, Herbart writes : “Whatever arts and acquirements a young man

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 19.

may learn from a teacher for the mere sake of profit, are as indifferent to the educator as the colour he chooses for his coat.”<sup>1</sup> Here, we believe, we have another case of aims which are opposed in a narrow interpretation, but are complementary in a higher and more comprehensive view. Evidently, we must begin by asking what is meant by ‘liberal’ on the one hand and ‘utilitarian’ on the other.

In his essay *Of a Liberal Education*, Whewell takes as the criterion the extent of intellectual culture. He, therefore, restricts the term to “the education of the upper classes . . . as alone exhibiting, in any completeness, the Idea of Education.”<sup>2</sup> For he holds that the intellectual content of a liberal education must be so wide that many years are needed for its acquisition. This content he divides into “Permanent” and “Progressive” studies. “To the former class belong those portions of knowledge which have long taken their permanent shape ;—ancient languages with their literature, and long-established demonstrated sciences. To the latter class belong the results of the mental activity of our own times ; the literature of our own age, and the sciences in which men are making progress from day to day. The former class of subjects connects us with the past ; the latter, with the present and the future.”<sup>3</sup>

As a statement of the scope of a wide intellectual culture, this would, we imagine, meet with general approval. It accords in spirit with Plato’s conception of the cultured man as the spectator of all time and of all existence, who loves and seeks truth, whose well-balanced mind is not swayed by petty passions because being intent on the delights of the soul the pleasures of the body are

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 1-2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 5-6.

of little moment to him.<sup>1</sup> But it cannot be granted that it is sufficient for a liberal *education*. It looks at the instrument rather than at the effect of its use. Moreover, in addition to the religious and moral training which Whewell explicitly omits from his discussion, there must be included a training of the body. For, as Plato taught, good education strives "to develop in the body and in the soul all the beauty and perfection of which they are capable."<sup>2</sup> More adequate is the definition of Vergerius: "We call those studies *liberal* which are worthy of a free man; those studies by which we attain and practise virtue and wisdom; that education which calls forth, trains and develops those highest gifts of body and of mind which ennoble men, and which are rightly judged to rank next in dignity to virtue only."<sup>3</sup>

But it is only by implication and indirectly that such statements have any reference to the conduct which should be the outcome of the liberally educated personality. Indeed, Sir William Hamilton expressly excluded such considerations when he wrote: "*liberal* education—that is, an education in which the individual is cultivated, not as an instrument towards some ulterior end, but as an end unto himself alone; in other words, an education, in which his absolute perfection as a man, and not merely his relative dexterity as a professional man, is the scope immediately in view."<sup>4</sup>

Here we have the antithesis between the liberal and the useful assumed, and it is seen to be closely connected

<sup>1</sup> See *Rep.* 485-487.

<sup>2</sup> *Laws*, 788.

<sup>3</sup> *De Ingenuis Moribus*: trans. by Woodward in *Vittorino da Feltre*, p. 102.

<sup>4</sup> *Discussions*, p. 264.

with that between an individualistic outlook on life and one which gives full place to the relations of the individual to his fellows. Of such a limitation all statements of the aim of education in terms of the individual alone are suspect: at least they all permit it to be read into them. They are, therefore, inadequate because they fail to set forth a real aim for a training for actual life. There lies at their base the idea that it is possible to be a man without being any particular kind of man—that is, without having any definite position or function in the general life of the community. This, indeed, is a view on which Rousseau specially prided himself. “In the natural order, men being all equal, their common calling is the state of manhood, and whoever is well educated for that cannot fill badly any which is connected with it. Whether my pupil be destined for the army, the Church, or the bar, concerns me little. . . . To live is the trade I would teach him.”<sup>1</sup> This is specious but fallacious. Once it is remembered that every human being has definite relations to his fellows and his own functions to fulfil in the world, it is seen that a man who is simply man in general, and no man in particular, is a mere abstraction. The “common calling” of humanity can only be followed—even in childhood—in a particular form; that is, in particular relations and with particular functions and duties. To make his scheme even plausible Rousseau has to postulate that no habits shall be formed in boyhood. This is an evident impossibility, but it is necessary to the argument, for Rousseau’s training is to fit his pupil to live the ‘life according to nature’—a scarcely human existence related merely to the physical environment.

<sup>1</sup> *Émile*, liv. i.

In truth, Rousseau does not train man in general, but a being fitted only to live in the woods and the fields apart from human society. That such a training would prepare for any specific form of social life is as palpable a fiction as is the avoidance of all habituation.

“Man might live at first  
The animal life : but is there nothing more ?  
In due time, let him critically learn  
How he lives ; and, the more he gets to know  
Of his own life’s adaptabilities,  
The more joy-giving will his life become.”<sup>1</sup>

As Pestalozzi, commenting on this doctrine of Rousseau, says, “When I ask, Why am I a citizen, or a handicraftsman, or a peasant, instead of being just a man? then I find that in all these relationships there are advantages that I cannot dispense with.... So soon... as I desire to make more of myself than Nature has made of my race, I must rise to the control of her.... There are ideals to be striven for, on the attainment of which man’s happiness rests.... He may find them when he ceases to be actuated by primitive natural motives.”<sup>2</sup>

But if man cannot live out of relations to his fellows, which are as essential parts of his life as are his individual personal qualities—without which, indeed, many of his powers and feelings would not really exist ; that is, without which he would be but a fragment of a man and not the general pattern of man, the offspring of Rousseau’s fantasy—then his education can only omit reference to those relations on condition of being itself

<sup>1</sup> Browning : *Cleon*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Enquiry*, trans. by Green in *Pestalozzi’s Educational Writings*, p. 59.

imperfect and incomplete. Nay more, in fitting a human being for life, education cannot be neutral. Throughout the time of youth habit is being formed, and if reference to the actual part which must be played in life be omitted, the habit of disregarding such functions and duties is surely growing and is unfitting the boy or girl for their future discharge. Though it does not, we think, express the whole truth, there is force in Herbart's contention that "the aim of education is sub-divided according to the aims of *choice*—not of the teacher, nor of the boy, but of the future man, and the aims of *morality*."<sup>1</sup> In the duties of his station each of us finds the concrete form of his moral life.

Thus it is that every abstract statement of the aim of education must constantly receive a fresh interpretation. Perfection of life would not be the same in form to Plato as to ourselves, for he and we live in very different spiritual atmospheres and in very different social and economic worlds. "A human being is nothing if he is not the son of his time ; and he must realize himself as that, or he will not do it at all."<sup>2</sup> So the ethical end of life and of education, while in ultimate essence the same, is ever demanding restatement, and, evidently, as the economic functions of men are always changing the form in which they fulfil those functions must also change.

This would be a sufficient reason, even were there no other, for rejecting the extreme psychological view that a child's education should be wholly determined by his spontaneous impulses. For that is to regard him simply as an individual. And "the mere individual is a delusion of theory ; and the attempt to realize it in

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> F. H. Bradley : *op. cit.* p. 172.

practice is the starvation and mutilation of human nature, with total sterility or the production of monstrosities.”<sup>1</sup> Demands from without are as integral a part of complete human nature as are promptings from within.

Here comes in the danger of the opposite error to that which we have been considering—the error of that exaggerated and narrow ‘utilitarianism’ which has disgusted all who believe in the value of other elements in life besides the material, so that in natural—if mistaken—reaction they have scouted all consideration of the usefulness of training in the practical affairs of life as foreign to education. The root of the whole evil is found in the absence of any general consideration of the meaning and purpose of life, and of education as a preparation for life—in a word, of educational theory. What is desired by the disciple of the prophets of Mammon is a trained ability to make money, to produce or aid in producing some material utility, to become an effective actor in the busy industrial and commercial life of the time. Now, all this is good in itself. For better or for worse our country lives mainly by manufactures and by commerce, and the very existence of the vast majority of its inhabitants depends on their industrial and commercial efficiency. An education which neglected this could not be a complete training for future life in our day and country.

It is, however, only too easy to exaggerate the importance of the material side of life, and the whole course of the development of civilization during the last century or so has tended to cause an undue emphasis to be laid on this, to the detriment of the culture of the

<sup>1</sup> F. H. Bradley : *op. cit.* p. 158.



higher spiritual powers. The advance in wealth and material well-being has been much more marked than growth in nobility of thought and act. The mistake of estimating men by their possessions, and not by their worth, is almost universal, absurd though it must appear to any clear thinker. "The delusion that money is an universal power, meeting all human needs, is a superstition amounting almost to idolatry."<sup>1</sup> This excessive respect for worldly goods obscures the real interdependence of men, for it gives birth to all forms and degrees of individual competition for the good things of this world. It exaggerates individualism, which by itself is anti-social, though, in due proportion with the sense of human brotherhood, it is an essential factor in a strong and self-respecting character.

This, then, is the danger of an excessive and narrow utilitarianism in education—that it tends to fix attention too exclusively upon those activities of life of which the spring is the acquirement of personal wealth, and so starves that higher spiritual side of our nature which is the true bond of union between ourselves and our fellows, and which is shown not in a barter of service but in a willing beneficence which seeks no return.

The aim of a liberal education is this very broadening and strengthening of our human sympathies and of our understanding of men and of society, the cultivation of power to find joy and delight in all that is noble, and beautiful, and true; the aim of a utilitarian training is to fit us to fulfil our economic functions in the form of social organization in which we live. Stated thus, the antithesis cannot be denied. The one is addressed to the spiritual side of our nature, the other to its material

<sup>1</sup> St. George Lane Fox Pitt: *The Purpose of Education*, p. 46.

side. If the one fits for work, the other prepares for an ennobling use of leisure.

But every person has some leisure, and if anyone escapes work it is only because he fails to recognize his social duties. This leads us to the denial that, whatever such an one's education might be called, whatever studies it might include, in whatever school or university it might be obtained, it is a liberal education. His higher self remains as undeveloped as if he had from his earliest years passed his time in a factory, and given his energies to tending a piece of machinery. It leads further to the rejection of Whewell's limitation of a liberal education to that given to the wealthy and leisured classes. It is possible to receive all the intellectual culture that Whewell sets forth and yet not be liberally educated; on the other hand, it is possible to be liberally educated, in that all the higher spiritual qualities are developed, without a long and expensive course of such instruction.

The test of whether an education is liberal or not is to be found in its effect on the soul of the educated; it cannot be decided by a simple scrutiny of the external means adopted to train that soul. To do this would be to make again the false assumption of the separateness of the elements yielded by our analysis of experience. No subject of study is in itself either liberal or illiberal; it becomes one or other only in its relation to the individual. If the pursuit of any subject strengthens the higher spiritual elements in any person, that subject is a factor in his liberal education; if it fails to do so it is not liberal, whether it be utilitarian or not. Many a boy who has spent the years of his youth in a compulsory study of Latin and Greek has never entered into the living spirit of classical writings, has never felt his heart

warm with wider human sympathies, or his spirit glow with the revelation of a higher ideal of beauty than he had hitherto imagined. To such an one classical literature has not been a means of liberal education. But to the few who do thus enter into communion with some of the greatest of human spirits that literature is truly liberalizing.

Everything depends on the spirit evoked in the learner, that is to say, on the kind of incentives to effort he finds in the subject. There is, doubtless, force in the contention that records of the thoughts, aspirations, ideals, and efforts, of mankind are richer in direct spiritual incentives to the majority of minds than are those that deal with the material world around us. Certainly, the possibility—or even probability—of such incentives being found in them seems clear to us, and, as a general statement, the claim that such subjects are specially ‘humanizing’ is probably true. But there are many particular cases in which it is either not true at all, or only with serious limitations. Not only may literature and history, and kindred ‘humanistic’ subjects, be studied without appreciable liberalizing effect, but the study of science may develop just those qualities which mark the liberally educated man.

The spirit evoked in the learner largely depends on the ostensible object with which the learning is pursued. To study classical or modern literature or law or medicine or philosophy with the simple purpose of earning a living by it is as definitely utilitarian as to study woodwork with the simple object of becoming a successful carpenter. It is not a matter of social class or of occupation, but of the extent to which the spiritual aim or the material aim dominates the life. If either

be ignored the education is narrow and imperfect, no matter what its apparent richness in content. For human life is both spiritual and material, and any education that fits for it wholly must be at once liberal and utilitarian.

Here the need is found for more careful examination of what is really utilitarian. Doubtless, all that prepares for earning a living comes under the name, and so far we have not gone beyond that meaning. But suppose we ask 'Why should a man earn a living?' we can get but the obvious answer 'In order that he may live.' 'But what is the object of living?' Push this question home, and the material utilitarian can in consistency only reply 'To earn a living,' for the acquisition of wealth is in itself nothing but earning a living on a more luxurious scale. So material utilitarianism reduces our lives to the purposeless treadmill round of earning a living in order to go on earning a living. If, however, the life be "more than meat, and the body than raiment" then a better and a wiser answer can be given—one which does not reduce human endeavour to the hollow mockery which is all that materialism has to offer. We should earn a living in order that we may live more fully and truly in our spiritual environment—that our hearts may become purer, our lives nobler. So only can we enter into living peace.

If this be so, we must ask whether what makes for that higher life for which the material life is but a foundation is not useful in as true a sense as what makes for efficiency in the material life itself. There can be but one answer. Indeed, it follows that the utility of the former is as much higher than that of the latter as the spiritual is above the material. Nothing bears

stronger witness to the prevailing materialism of life and thought to-day than the current restriction of 'utility' to what concerns the maintenance and amelioration of the physical life. Let this delusion be destroyed, and the 'practical' man may cease to despise the things of the spirit, and the philosopher to hold himself aloof from mundane affairs. The thinkers of ancient Greece erred by despising the material life of industry; the 'practical' tendency of our own age is in the direction of the opposite error of exaggerating its vital importance. And the latter error is more fatal than the former. The progress of material civilization fifty years ago seemed to satisfy the aspirations of most men; now the whole social fabric is threatened, just because the spirit of mutual beneficence—the strong feeling of the interdependence of all the members of a community—has been neglected. In a word, an exaggerated utilitarianism in life and in education—the education of home, of friends and acquaintances, of street and workshop, if not of school (and that was often utilitarian in spirit even when it taught little that was practically useful)—has so sapped the higher human life that the crying need of our day is the spiritualizing or liberalizing of the education of all classes.

Such a liberalizing cannot be accomplished unless width of interest and of outlook be secured. Any system which absorbs the interest in the self and its concerns is opposed in spirit to a liberal education. This is the root of the evil of the premature specialization of studies which marks the intellectual training given to-day. Modern life becomes ever more complex, and modern men as individuals take an ever more restricted part in its material activities. This is itself narrowing.

But, at the same time, modern life provides ever-increasing means of satisfying interests apart from work. Public libraries, museums, art galleries, and parks, frequent concerts and lectures, theatres, societies with religious, social, and intellectual, objects—these and kindred avenues are open to the dwellers in our large towns where contact with nature is not facile. All are opportunities for the maintenance of the higher spiritual life. None of us probably will feel strongly that all of them are incentives, but all should hear and respond to the call of some. It is notorious, however, that but a small minority of any class is so affected. The majority seems to be immersed in business, and to seek relaxation only in some of the many trivialities which lie on the surface of life but do not enter into its core. Thus, a real utility calls for an education which should prepare the individual to respond to such calls as these to feed his spiritual life, and so not to drift into a mere economic materialist spending all his strength and energy in securing that which perishes in the use. Premature specialization cannot do this. It is not that many masses of facts, or statements of facts on various topics, need be acquired. Too often erudition is the grave of thought. It is that dynamic forces should be brought into frequent and strong operation which should impel the individual to seek to understand, and to sympathize with, many of the forms of existence in the world of which he forms a part.

All education, then, whether its formal operation be extended through school and university till the years of manhood, or whether schooling ceases with boyhood, will, if it be true education, be at once liberal and utilitarian; for it will make for efficiency in the

material life and for fullness and joy in the spiritual life.

No one can say how much of our present unrest and distress is due to the failure to recognize this in practice, and that failure is itself the outcome of the tendency to allow all such matters as education to drift along on the stream of tradition and prejudice, the issue obscured by a careless and ambiguous use of terms. The meditation which results in theory of life and of education was never more needed than it is to-day. That is to say that nothing can have a greater practical or utility value than such careful and judicious theorizing. For sound theorizing is not the spinning of webs of fancy, but the deeper understanding of facts. The chief fact to be understood is surely this compatibility of the liberal and the useful. Each makes for perfection and completeness of the individual life, and for its effective membership of the organized community. "I call a compleat and generous Education," wrote Milton, "that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously, all the offices both private and publick of Peace and War."<sup>1</sup> So that the compatibility we are urging was asserted by one of the greatest of Englishmen. It is sad that neglect of theory of education has obscured it for more than two and a half centuries.

Is a culture at once liberal and practically useful mainly a matter of knowledge or of mental capacity and attitude? This brings us to the antithesis in the theory of intellectual culture between erudition and formal mental training. It is fashionable in the scholastic world at present to deny the value of mere knowledge of facts—and to demand it in examinations. Little experience,

<sup>1</sup> *Tractate on Education.*

however, is needed to convince us that if acquirement of facts is a preparation for life it is a very poor one, for many—if not most—of the facts each one of us learnt from our teachers at school have long since disappeared beyond our power of recall. Such acquisitions were of the nature of artificially formed habits of verbal expression, which speedily decayed with disuse. Nor are they generally either missed or regretted; they never touched the imagination or stirred desire. The only facts which are constituents in that real intellectual life, which is not so much erudition as a wise and sane conviction and point of view, are those which relate us to our environment in such a way that some purpose is furthered, or some light thrown on that which was felt to be obscure, so that a greater power, unity, and comprehensiveness, are felt to arise within us. This means essentially that such facts are actively sought, not reluctantly, or even passively, received. The seeking involves investigation and assimilation to the growing dynamic forces which relate each individual to his surroundings. So the facts do not remain in the 'storehouse of memory' laid up like the treasure hidden in a napkin, ready to be reproduced as little changed as possible, and as far as may be, without diminution. In so far as schools foster this latter mode of relating their pupils to the world in which they have to live, they are not only uneducative, but actively anti-educative, institutions. For, here again habituation plays its part, and a wrong attitude towards learning is cultivated, the natural result of which is a distaste for all that is conventionally included under that term.

There is no true intellectual training unless the mental powers are exercised. The idea that these are separate



organs of mental life, which can be so trained that they are universally applicable, was the fashionable educational doctrine of the nineteenth century, and still retains the adhesion of many, both schoolmasters and laymen. It was the assumption on which the devotion of school life to the study of Latin and Greek was urged, and which Spencer and Huxley showed could be used with equal effect in advocacy of science. This theory implies that the relations of man to his environment are accidental, and not of the very texture of his life. According to it, man's powers not only have their root in his nature, but, in whatever field they may be trained, they can shake themselves free from their associations, and function readily in other spheres. Experience does not bear out the theory; and, as the complexity of life and of knowledge increases, its inadequacy is more and more openly revealed. A man's judgement is sound only in matters in which he can understand the force and the relevance of the facts on which he is required to exercise it—that is, when he has pertinent knowledge. Life cannot be reduced to syllogisms, the premises of which stand in isolation from all but themselves. To cause a child to learn subjects chosen because their study demands the exercise of certain forms of mental power, and therefore trains certain faculties, is not enough. He may as a result be well prepared to deal with problems cognate to those in which his powers have been trained, but for dealing with questions remote in nature he has received no direct preparation. He can only transfer to the study of the matter they embrace any habits of application, of care in weighing evidence, and of caution in drawing conclusions, which his training may have made characteristic of all he undertakes.

This is not really questioned when it is pushed home to matters of knowledge. The classical scholar does not claim that by his linguistic and literary training his judgement has been made of value on a question of scientific or mechanical knowledge. If he can form an opinion on such topics it is because he has acquired cognate knowledge. Similarly, the botanist may have a highly-trained habit and a remarkably developed power of observation in matters botanical: he can see on a slide in a microscope many things which to a layman may be invisible. But he may pass over unnoticed many indications of character in those around him, or many details in a picture, a cathedral, or an orchestral symphony. Indeed, this is often not only recognized but exaggerated. One result of the specialization of modern life is that there is a tendency to assume that a man's judgement cannot be of worth outside the main line of his interests. So a clergyman is held to be a bad man of business, and a solicitor to know little about agriculture. Plato's abstract principle of 'one man, one pursuit' is arbitrarily, or perhaps unconsciously, assumed as an actual rule of experience. No doubt, in many cases such suspicions are justified by facts, but to generalize them into a rule is as illegitimate as is the opposite principle that specific training gives general power. Special training directly develops some general power in a specific form, but the activities of life are not isolated in water-tight compartments, and it is certain that a trained intellect can more readily master a new subject than can an untrained one. But the subject must be mastered by fresh work before judgement on any part of it is of worth.

Each of these theories—that of acquiring knowledge

and that of mental training—is thus seen to be complementary to the other, and only when the separation of spiritual activity into its form or faculty, and its content or matter learnt, is taken as absolute, instead of as merely the abstract result of an analysis we ourselves make of the concrete facts of experience, do they appear as opposed to each other. Such a separation has no correlate in that experience itself. In real life all learning is a training of intellectual power, and all training of such power is given through the medium of matter which, by the process itself, is learnt. To take a mental abstraction as a basis and guide of concrete effort is to condemn that effort to partial sterility. The question as to what a given individual should learn must be answered by a consideration of what is needed to enlighten and vivify both his present life and his probable future experience. No general answer is, therefore, either possible or desirable, though broadly typical answers can be found in so far as the forms and requirements of various positions in a modern state can be grouped. The attempt to make the instruction wholly relative to one form of an assumed future, without reference either to present needs or to the wider and more general functions of the future, is the error of the extreme vocational doctrine. It sacrifices both the present child and the future man in the hope of making a possible mechanic or surgeon or linguist or mathematician.

If the answer has really taken account of all the present and probable needs of life, it will contain material the real assimilation of which will call for the exercise of the powers of the mind, and will thus give the mental exercise upon which the other doctrine so rightly insists. Doubtless, an unskilful teacher may do much to hinder

his pupils from rightly learning anything, especially if he act upon the hypothesis that he should do as much as possible for them, so that the path to learning may be broad and pleasant and well strewed with flowers. Alas! that this broad and pleasant road—as he proudly deems it—should not only lead to intellectual distraction but should so sap the energy of him who is led along it that he becomes mentally decrepit, and goes out into the world with powers of self-direction and guidance undeveloped and dormant. But the error lies with the teacher, not with the conception of what should be taught.

As knowledge is power to act and to meet the calls of life as they are made, so there is no separation between what needs to be learnt and the exercise of the powers required to learn it. Each must be as wide and varied as is experience. The assumed antithesis between knowledge and faculty only appears when knowledge is separated from the mind which knows, and faculty from that on which it is exercised and apart from which it cannot even exist. Immediately this separation is recognized for what it is—a mere matter of convenience for abstract discussion—it is seen that each piece of learning calls for that exercise of mental power which will be needed in its future use. Faculty and knowledge are, in actual life, not two things, but one complex dynamic power, as insolubly united as are the speed and the bullet, or the blow and the hammer. Of course, as power is developed it is there to be turned in another direction, so that new learning becomes more facile, because the mind is habituated to concentrated effort and methodical work. That is the truth in the theory of mental gymnastic. But till the power is applied in the fresh

direction, so that knowledge is acquired, it remains a mere potentiality and not an actual force in life. That is the truth in the doctrine of the value of knowledge. Only when the two are combined is it true, as matter of fact, that knowledge is power.

This line of thought leads us also to the resolution of another antithesis—whether education can do all or nothing. There is in education as in life the interaction of personal spiritual activity and environment, and it is both easy and common so to exaggerate the strength of either as practically to reduce the other to nullity. On the one hand we are told that education cannot change nature, but only remove hindrances to its development: on the other that original nature is passive, and is moulded entirely by external influences, so that to the extent to which an educator can control the environment he can determine the nature of the individual he is training.

This antithesis derives its strength from the assumption of that same essential separateness between man and his environment which we have already considered and rejected. The solution—that each is interrelated with the other in that one complex reality which we call life, so that neither can be negated without the annihilation of that life—shows that both these views of the power of education are exaggerated. That the influence of environment is found in every detail of life is a necessary corollary, so that it is by no means surprising that certain wild children, who had in infancy been abstracted from human habitations by wolves and had been suffered to live among their captors, should have shown no traces of civilized human life. They had not learnt to talk because their environment at the time when the instinct

to speak was functioning included no model from which they could learn. But they had learnt to do other things which children brought up in normal human surroundings do not learn to do. In other words, their lives were—like the lives of all of us—a constant interaction of personal force and personal environment.

So far, then, as education can determine what occasions for nutriment and exercise a child's soul shall have, to that extent it can determine the matter amid which that soul shall find the objects of its thoughts and feelings and desires. But it cannot determine more than this. The relative dynamic force of the impulses towards this or that feature of the environment the educator can and should notice. He may then so rouse opposed forces within the soul that those directions of energy which he judges undesirable may be checked. This he does by emphasizing some other element in the spiritual environment, in the hope that it may find respondent to it a nascent force. In brief, the dynamic forces of life are born within us, but what they become—the direction they take, and their relative strength—depends on the amount and kind of cognate material with which the environment presents them. Thus it is evident that the spiritual environment of purposes and ideals is of greater educative importance than is the material environment which determines bodily comfort or discomfort. The latter makes for or against spiritual uplifting indirectly, through the thoughts and desires to which it may give occasion to function ; the former calls them forth directly.

Education—or the conscious control of environment—is, then, limited by the influence of those constituents of the environment which it cannot control. It is further limited by the extent of the bodily and spiritual powers

of the individuals to be educated, and by the readiness with which they respond to educative influences or surroundings. This latter depends largely upon the personality of the individual educators, who are the most active and prominent elements in those surroundings. Some educators can infuse with their own spirit practically the whole of a child's spiritual environment ; others are no more than isolated points in that environment, and once out of sight are out of mind.

So it is seen that the duality which is fatal to clear thinking on life and experience in general is equally disastrous to any theory of education which is based on the hypothesis of the independence of the child to be educated and his educative surroundings—that is, the educators and their conscious determination of the scope which shall be given to his spiritual and bodily activities. The education of the child is the dynamic stream of life which is at once the child and the surroundings that influence him.

If one of these factors be removed the process of education ceases ; if one of them be partially withdrawn it is distorted. It is obvious that if a child die his education comes to an end, and that it is thrown out of shape if he become mentally afflicted, or, to a less extent, if he be physically disabled. This is equally true if the other factor be prematurely removed or weakened. Thus, the widespread notion that only at school does education go on has for the great majority of children the disastrous consequences that during childhood it is intermittent, and as soon as school days are over it ceases. But the educative environment is very incomplete if the school is the whole of it. Schooling must end for the majority of children long before the age at which education by

others has been transmuted into self-governance and self-direction. Outside the school there is a pressing need for the active recognition of their responsibility by the other constituents of a complete educational environment, especially by families, and by religious and social communities.

Employers, too, have their educative duties. Each and all who are in a relation of authority towards the young ought to recognize that this responsibility extends beyond the activities which they direct and which are the immediate bond between them and those whom they employ, and touches the whole life of those partially under their charge. The weakening of the personal relation of almost parental responsibility which formerly existed between an employer of the labour of the young and those whom he taught and paid was an inevitable outcome of the extension of modern industry, but its absolute negation, and the substitution for it of a mere money tie, is a misfortune to the community.

Much more inexcusable, and much more disastrous, is the abnegation of their educational duties by many parents. The prevalent loose thought as to the rights of children is doubtless partly responsible, as it fits in with a kind of vague and sentimental humanitarianism at present fashionable. But it may be suspected that mere inertia of will is yet more the reason. There must also be added that absorption in the superficial trivialities of life which, unhappily, so often marks the modern mother. Many causes combine to lead to a common neglect of parental responsibility, and little hope of improvement in our social life can be felt till they are removed, and parents again recognize generally that indiscriminating tenderness and indulgence, mixed with neglect, are not



competent to train a human life. The sad symptoms of superficial and narrowly egoistic lives, of class antagonisms, of absence of the recognition of the essential interdependence of all the constituents of a community, show how far real education is wanting among us. On the other hand, happily, the increasing number of men and women whose lives are inspired by an intense conviction of the need of social solidarity, who not only feel deeply the ills from which the body politic suffers and the dangers with which it is threatened, but think seriously and earnestly how those ills may be remedied and those dangers averted, is evidence that it has not been altogether lacking. All such social reformers recognize that good education is the chief lever by which to raise their fellows.

This is surely true, but it is a far cry from such a position to the popular fallacy that lengthened schooling and increased instruction are a certain cure for social ills. Unless the increased scholastic efforts are inspired with the spirit, and directed by the principles, of a true education they are little likely to contribute to real improvement; and unless they are supported by concurrent efforts in the homes of the scholars they must be largely wasted. Improvement in education depends on the elevation of the general spiritual life of the community, and this depends on improved education. Nor is this a vicious logical circle. Such mutual interaction and determination of forces is the characteristic feature of human life, and is itself a proof that that life is throughout a relation between man and his environment. The important thing to remember is that they *are* forces, and that if their mutual action does not make for exaltation of life it must make for its degradation. We may try to

increase the one force, but unless the other be increased as well the total effective result cannot be great. The spiritual uplifting of the people needs to be sought directly, as well as indirectly through education.

We may now sum up the argument. A true education is concerned with the whole being: not with body alone, nor with soul alone; still less with some one aspect of the spiritual life, such as intellect. It is equally concerned with the whole width of life: not with utilitarian occupations alone, nor with intellectual or aesthetic pursuits or even with morality of conduct alone. It recognizes that man is both an individual responsible for his life and a constituent in a community in relation to which he has both rights and obligations, and that the latter of these is as essential a part of his nature as the former. It takes account of the real nature of life or experience—whether it be seen chiefly in practical activity, in thought, or in feeling and emotion—that always it is a complex unitary process, and that the distinction we make in it between subject and object—thinker and matter thought—is artificial. One term of the relation is meaningless apart from the other, and life is a constant synthesis of the two. It accepts, too, the truth that this complex process is not mechanical, but vital and spiritual. What in the potential spiritual and material environment is taken up into experience is determined by the ever-expanding and often-changing active trends of spiritual energy of the individual, and by the kinship between them and this or that part of that potential environment. It understands by environment everything which in any way touches the life, and so it remembers that the actively exerted influences of other human beings are the most important elements in that

environment. Yet it avoids the error of imagining that strong exertion of influence is sure to succeed. It bears in mind that, no matter how much effort may be put into the attempt to influence, there is only actual influence to the extent to which an active response is evoked, so that the impetus is taken up into the life, it may be positively as a directive force, or it may be negatively as a repellent one. There is no education outside the will of the person educated ; but on the other hand there is no educative influence outside the will of the educator. In true education each educator will recognize that he is not the only educative force, and that unless all those forces act in harmony they tend to neutralize each other. He will remember that some educative forces are wrongly directed, and he will be very careful to consider whether any of his own efforts fall into that class. Wrong direction more often implies absence of the right ideal than wrong intention.

A true and complete conception of the educative process, which combines its antitheses in a synthesis determined by an understanding of the nature of human life and so avoids exaggeration on one side or the other, is, however, only an abstraction until it is determined towards what concrete end the process is directed. Now, a process which takes up the whole of human life can only make for an end the nature of which is given by that life. For, "what we desire must be in our minds ; we must think of it ; and, besides, we must be related to it in a particular way. If it is to be the end, we must feel ourselves one with it, and in it ; and how can we do that, if it does not belong to us, and has not been made part of us?" But, as man is by nature a part of the social whole into which he is born, "where is the difficulty of

my object being one and the same with the object of other people ; so that, having filled the form of my personality with a life not merely mine, I have at heart, and have identified with and made one with myself, objective interests, things that are to be, and in and with the existence of which I am not to satisfy my mere private self ; so that, as I neither will nor can separate myself from what makes me myself, in realizing them I realize myself, and can do so only by realizing them?"<sup>1</sup> If the end be too narrowly conceived the process must be both imperfect and deformed, for one aspect of life will be over-emphasized. On the other hand, unless the true nature of the process be fully and clearly grasped, the end conceived can hardly do justice to the full and perfect stature of humanity. This is really to say that a perfect conception of education will only be possible when a perfect comprehension of life is attained. To that, mankind can as yet lay no claim. All that the most earnest thinker and reformer can do is to analyse as carefully and exactly as he can the facts with which experience presents him, and from them deduce the needs and aspirations of human nature, and conceive an ideal in which they would find satisfaction and fruition. The task of the thinker on education is to seek the common elements in such ideals, and to try to reconcile apparently discrepant views by recognizing the truth in each and seeking the limitations of that truth, in the hope of so reaching a fuller conception, which will show the divergences not as irreconcilably opposed but as partial and complementary apprehensions of the whole truth.

From our analysis it appears that the end of education is the development of full and effective human person-

<sup>1</sup> F. H. Bradley, *op. cit.* pp. 75 to 77.

ality—that is, a life in full and admirable relations to the universe. This seems less liable to misinterpretation than the statement that education is the formation—or even the development—of character. For ‘character’ carries with it preponderatingly individualistic associations, which can be avoided in using the term ‘personality.’ It is true that one’s personality is one’s very self, but it is one’s whole self, in its weakness as well as in its strength, in its moods as well as in its principles, in its disposition as well as in its will, in its relations to the whole of its surroundings and not only to those in which the moral quality is prominent, as it appears to others and not only as we may see it ourselves. It is part of a man’s personality to be jovial or grave, witty or dull, quick or slow ; to be interested in this or that branch of knowledge, to be attracted by all the newest suggestions, whether in art, in science, in politics, or in religion, or to be most fondly attached to all that is old and sanctioned by tradition ; but these, and many such, are not parts of what is commonly understood by character.

Thus interpreted, character is a part of personality but not the whole of it. We can dislike a man’s personality and yet on the whole admire his character ; in other cases, much as we dislike and even despise the character we are conscious of an attraction—of which we are, perhaps, half ashamed—towards the personality.

It is, however, not sufficient to relate character and personality as part and whole, for that gives no guidance for the distribution of educative efforts. Remembering that, as we are using the words, all character is personality, but not all personality is character, we may say broadly, that character is that part of personality which refers to one’s attitude towards the moral aspect

of life—towards duties requiring strength and persistence of will—rather than to intellectual interests or charm of manner. So character may be called the core of personality, because it contains that nucleus of purpose which determines the general trend of life, and around which all smaller purposes and ideals are more or less effectively and intelligently grouped. If the character does not grow in strength and dignity the personality can but show all kinds of inconsistent qualities, and the life be marked by vacillation and ineffectiveness. Character sets up the central ideals of life ; other transitory and partial ideals may not all be properly included in character, though they may determine smaller and less important parts of life. To desire to become a good dancer, a good conversationist, or a brilliant wit, may lead to conduct which gives a distinct mark to the personality, but we should not speak of any of such desires and purposes as in themselves part of character. Of course, if their relation to the obligations of life and the calls of duty is one of antagonism, then the yielding to their solicitations shows weakness of character, and their adoption or rejection is the work of character.

It is not possible to mark off character from the rest of personality by any rigid line, nor is it desirable to attempt it. That would be in contradiction to the doctrine of the essential unity of the normal life on which we are throughout insisting. And, in practice, the absolute exclusion of any one set of activities from the purview of character would lead to a disastrous moral laxity. Yet it is important to remember that what common convention includes under character is not the whole of life, and that, therefore, education should not be narrowed to moral considerations. They are its first care, because

character is the very marrow of personality ; but they are not its whole care, because personality—that is, life—is wider than character.

Character is essentially the inner spirit which determines the motives of acts ; so that no one can directly know the character, or with certainty infer the motives, of another. Others can see only our acts, and from them they speculate as to our motives and imagine our characters. So they form a judgement as to our moral worth. But their view of us is not confined to this. It embraces also our disposition, our manners, our powers—in short, our whole personality. Thus it may happen that a man's reputation may be of a very mixed kind. At once he may be judged a charming companion and a man of loose principles ; a 'good fellow' and a moral weakling. Some may lay the emphasis on the external attractions, others on the more solid internal qualities. But always the core of reputation is common estimation of character.

Here is danger of a dualism against which education should be on its guard. Reputation and character may approximately agree, and the more closely the outward act conforms to the inner spirit—that is, the more perfectly the life is organized—the nearer should be the approximation. But there is always some divergence, and that this may be serious is brought home to us at times in a startling way when some event lays bare a character altogether contrary to the reputation hitherto enjoyed. Now, the desire to be well esteemed by those around is a strong incentive to almost everybody, and it is often a valuable inhibitory force when a temptation to act unworthily is felt. The danger is that instead of strengthening the power of resistance it may

bend the energies to the avoidance of discovery. The effort may be to preserve the reputation, but not the character, unsullied.

Here we have another instance of the illegitimate separation of the external from the internal in our lives, and one which, if persisted in, means a continuous degradation of character. The ideal set up is, to *have* something, not, to *be* something; thus it is of the same order as that of the gross materialist who regards the accumulation of wealth as the highest function of man and the sole end worthy of serious endeavour. The end is thus put outside the spiritual life itself, and placed in the environment in a hidden negative relation to the real life. It is hardly to be doubted that, for want of a clear grasp of this distinction, both families and schools often do much to cultivate a kind of double personality, in which the real purpose of life is kept secret in the heart, and the ostensible purpose shown in observed conduct is not really felt. Such a life is on its way towards moral shipwreck. It is developing weakness instead of gathering strength as it advances, for its energies are divided against themselves.

There is another aspect of the relation of character and reputation. As reputation is the general estimate of a person's worth by the people among whom he lives it is determined by the standards of value current in that particular social group. It is not an absolute reflexion of worth, but a reflexion in a mirror more or less distorted by common weaknesses and misapprehensions. It follows that to attempt to justify reputation is never the highest aim open to the individual. So far, then, as character is moulded by such attempts it reaches a standard lower than it should and could



attain. The goal which education should set before its disciples is not the pattern set by the usually very moderate expectations of others, but the ideal which each soul can see revealed if it will look beyond actual human weaknesses and imperfections, and compromises of the true and the false, the good and the evil, in the service of a supposed expediency. Unless reputation be left to take care of itself while the highest is strenuously pursued, the life will not advance as far as it could towards perfection.

The educator, then, must recognize the important practical influence of the human environment, and must often find in it excuse or palliation, and cause for pity rather than condemnation, of much of which he disapproves in the conduct of those under his care. He will endeavour, so far as he can influence it, to raise the standard of expectation as to conduct and motive which the smaller society he controls holds before its members, but he should also endeavour to lead each individual gradually but surely to look for guidance beyond and above the common expectation and the common maxims of acceptable conduct, and to find in the approval of his own conscience a surer sanction than in the acquiescence of his fellows.

Personality, then, is the whole man in all his activities, in all his relations, in all his aspirations. It is noble in proportion as its foundation is a noble character—steadfast and high in aim, wide and tolerant in outlook, beneficent in intention, deriving its inspiration from a loving faith in a personal and all-embracing wisdom and goodness and love.

Looked at thus it is plain that the growth of personality is the gradual organization of life in a hierarchical

system of living purposes. Starting with the instincts and other innate tendencies, through experience of living in certain surroundings and under certain influences dynamic forces gather strength in life. On the one hand, these forces need to be harmonized and reduced to order; on the other, none is to be absolutely negated. The aim is the whole and complete life, and in that everything that is natural to man has its appropriate place and function. The task of education is, then, one of direction of these inner forces, not of attempted annihilation on the one hand, nor of leaving them to their own internecine struggle on the other. In early life those forces which make for the preservation, development, and gratification, of the bodily life are the strongest, and unless the appearance of innate higher spiritual forces be watched for, and they be eagerly and sedulously nursed into strength, they will stand but little chance in their inevitable conflict with the lower impulses. Yet, could the latter be altogether eliminated human life would be but a fragment, and the spiritual itself would tend to become arid and unfruitful. It is subordination, not annihilation, that is to be sought, and subordination is gained indirectly by strengthening the higher, which then acts directly in taking for its own the energy and opportunity which would otherwise have found vent in the lower.

So the whole of educative effort can be summed up in the term 'incentive.'

"I count life just a stuff

To try the soul's strength on, educe the man."<sup>1</sup>

To make manifest that a union of two or more modes of effort—or trends of energy—will more fully secure what

<sup>1</sup> Browning, *In a Balcony*.

is held desirable is to begin the task of co-ordinating and organizing the spiritual life. The process is the same in spirit throughout, though continually wider in scope. Its ultimate aim is the perfect organization of life under one great purpose which finds its meaning in one great ideal. To these, in many ranks of extent and importance, other ideals and purposes are related, so that the entire life becomes a community of forces covering the whole of human nature and aiming at the perfection and completion of that nature. Throughout, we are dealing not with empty abstract forces but with active, pulsing, concrete, human life. Such a dominating ideal would, therefore, be a true and complete picture of the highest good possible to man, and that, as we have urged, is found only in a relation to that highest good and true personality which we call God. That is the ideal towards which a perfect education would strive ; and educational progress can consist only in drawing continually nearer to it. But the possibility of such approximation depends before all else on reaching as true a conception as is possible of the meaning and purpose of human life. Unless in practice education be dominated by such a conception it can be but a concourse of well-intentioned efforts, which have no determinate effect because they have no determinate goal.

Though we have attempted to reconcile divergent views on the aims of education yet we must not shut our eyes to the fact that this reconciliation does not cover the most ultimate question of all—the question whether the spiritual or the material is to determine the main purpose of life. “It is often urged that the two sides of our nature can be made to work hand in hand. Possibly, but the important question is : which shall be

dominant? Unless we constantly keep our minds clear on this point, the risk is very great.”<sup>1</sup> So, too is the danger great that the current antitheses, instead of being held together in a higher synthetic view, may be alternately taken as absolute. For ourselves we have no hesitation. To us “the life is more than meat and the body than raiment.” It follows that if the material naturalistic view now so often accepted implicitly as the practical guide of life, though less often explicitly preached by professed philosophers than it was fifty years ago, be true, then our doctrine is fundamentally false, though some of the details of the practice we recommend may be true in this as in other settings. If there be no originative spiritual energy in man, so that his life is wholly formed by external agencies, then our theory falls to the ground. If, on the other hand, man be uninfluenced by his surroundings and undetermined by his own past life, again our words are vain. If man’s life be not at once a self-determining spiritual activity and a constituent in the social life—or rather social lives—in which it is passed, then again we have no true message to deliver. For we assume as our fundamental principle that man is spiritually free, and yet determined by the spiritual life he has lived and is living, and by the spiritual environment in which he has lived it; that the ultimate aim of life is, therefore, spiritual and not material; that spiritual growth is advance in spiritual capacity both to receive and to impart spiritual strength; that this implies that man’s spiritual life is derived from, dependent on, and sustained by, spiritual agencies which are super-natural in the sense that they are above and beyond the material. In brief and plain terms, that

<sup>1</sup> St. George Lane Fox Pitt, *op. cit.* p. 51.

man's life is not only material but moral and social, and, yet more, religious. Consequently, the theory of education we are attempting to set forth is one which assumes that the activities of life should be evaluated according to a spiritual standard which finds the highest good of man in the perfection of his spiritual nature—in nobility of heart and mind, in reverence and awe in the contemplation of the divine perfection, in love of all that is great and good, in hearty acceptance of duty, in strenuous endeavour, in earnest longing for truth, in appreciation of beauty, in an estimate of the things of life consistent with the view that what a man is far outweighs what he has, whether of material or of intellectual possessions. It seeks to work out the principles of educative activity which follow from these fundamental conceptions, principles, the verification of which must be sought in experience of the actual training of the young.

## CHAPTER III

### SYNTHESIS OF LIBERTY AND AUTHORITY

THE aim of life, as we have urged, is the organization of experience in a hierarchy of purposes making for all that is good and true and beautiful. Thus, the true life is ever progressive: in it character is never petrified by habituation, but uses the automatism of habit as its instrument. This is to say that man's end is spiritual freedom; for to be free is to be able to realize the potentialities of the self. Only in proportion as the individual is free, therefore, can he be said to attain the perfection of his nature. Free activity is thus seen to be the very essence of human life.

Yet we know that we are bound and limited on all sides. Desires often fail of fruition. Not what we would, but what we can, determines our actual endeavours:

“The common problem, yours, mine, every one's  
Is—not to fancy what were fair in life  
Provided it could be,—but, finding first  
What may be, then find how to make it fair  
Up to our means: a very different thing!”<sup>1</sup>

For man exists as a constituent both in the material universe and in a social organization, and his power to act is limited by the necessity that his action should be

<sup>1</sup> Browning: *Bishop Blougram's Apology*.

in harmony with physical and social forces. The interaction between the inner spiritual force and the environment which we have found to be of the very texture of life negates any such idea as that of individual freedom acting in a kind of material and spiritual vacuum, and influenced by nothing but the impulses that arise spontaneously—that is, unprompted—within itself.

Yet it is such spontaneous impulses which on the surface appear to be most free, and this identification of 'spontaneity' and liberty lies at the bottom of the suspicion of authority which is so prominent a feature of all aspects of human intercourse to-day. Doubtless there is added as a contributory cause a general self-sufficiency and pride, which the material progress of the last century has tended to engender. Nor must the influence of the eighteenth century doctrines of the equality and natural rights of men be forgotten. So that the fashionable impatience of authority in the training of the young is only a manifestation of a much more general spirit which repudiates obedience as a moral obligation in all the relations of life.

Even when we pass beyond the elementary stage of thought and experience which accepts this identification, and find that freedom is connected less with unmotivated impulse than with deliberately adopted purpose, the task of reconciling our innate thirst for freedom with the circumstances of our lives remains. For all around us are other beings with the same right to the free pursuit of their own private ends, and the same need of so realizing their natures. This would give need for reconciliation, even were all human beings equal and independent units. In such a state of anarchic individualism each would strive to carry out his will, and

the strongest would prevail. So equality would disappear, and those unfitted to survive the struggle would be annihilated. There would be 'natural selection' and the 'survival of the fittest'—to survive. This is the idea upon which Tolstoy would base an education which each child should receive when and how he likes, and which recognizes in the educator no power of constraint over him.

In organized community life, however, this anarchical arrangement has never prevailed. The essence of such life is the existence of government in graduated stages. The philosophical justification of this subordination of man by man is that the community is the individual on a larger scale—larger in aims and collective wisdom as well as in power :

“A people is but the attempt of many  
To rise to the completer life of one.”<sup>1</sup>

The moral basis of subordination is the fact of relative superiority and inferiority. No doubt, in the very imperfect forms of social organization which mankind has yet attained, this relation is often violated in the actual arrangement of ranks, but where it is obvious—as in the small and natural society of the family—it is a violation of nature, and not an adherence to it, which would treat the child as the moral or intellectual equal of the parents. As rational would it be to assume that he is their equal in bodily strength.

But it is urged that freedom can only grow out of freedom. In the sphere of education, this involves a fallacy of ambiguity. The freedom into which we desire to grow is connected with purpose ; that from which this

<sup>1</sup> Browning: *Luria*.



is said to spring is related, not to purpose but to impulse which, as we all know from our own experience, is too often the most dangerous enemy of purpose. To this latter all restraint—all authority—is certainly antithetical: to the former we hope to show it is complementary.

On the first view, and to the superficial thought which take things at their face-value, then, authority is opposed to liberty, for it always appears as constraining the individual to do what he would not otherwise do, or as restraining him from doing what he wishes to do. Even if it be granted that some regulation of conduct by others is necessary in social life and in education, yet, so long as no principle of synthesis is reached, the problem of the extent to which the exercise of authority is justified remains unsolved. It is determined by expediency, and is ever liable to be met with opposition. Such uncertainty in education can only be disastrous, and its resolution is one of the most urgent needs that theory is called on to supply.

“Where am I to draw the dividing line between freedom and obedience?” asked Pestalozzi in the diary<sup>1</sup> in which he recorded his education of his little son; and in these words he stated this perennial practical problem of all human life, and, therefore, of all education. Always and everywhere we are confronted by the eternal antithesis between liberty and authority, and the progress of mankind has been a long-continued effort to determine the legitimate sphere of each. We think of the struggle, perhaps, most easily in politics, and we trace the attempts of nations and peoples to attain political liberty; or we look at the history of thought, and congratulate our-

<sup>1</sup> Trans. by Green, *Life and Work of Pestalozzi*, p. 39.

selves that we live in an age and country in which each one may think what he wills, and, within very wide limits, may try to persuade others to agree with him. Liberty is a modern divinity, to which many odes have been addressed ; authority is out of fashion, is put on one side as antiquated and discredited, or, at the least, is required to justify its existence as a necessary evil.

Yet, as Horace warned us, "Though you expel nature with a fork, yet will she ever return." And it is instructive to the student of mankind to note how the old goddess Authority when expelled from any of the affairs of men soon comes back, masquerading in the garb of her supplanter, Liberty. For, indeed, both liberty and authority are original requirements of the human soul and of human life. The true task ever is to reconcile them, or rather, to resolve their forces into one supreme force ; never to eliminate the one and give life over to the exclusive domain of the other. The problem of life is insoluble in terms either of freedom alone or of authority alone ; the more nearly the true relation of these two forces is found the more nearly do we approach the solution of that great problem, which, whether we recognize it or not, faces us all.

This necessity of combining liberty and authority is commonly acknowledged in politics. Neither in tyranny nor in anarchy does the student of history or the man of sound common sense, taught by experience and observation of life, look to find the ideal political organization. Nay, in neither does he expect to find in its purity even the one principle on which it is ostensibly based. The Reign of Terror was the eighteenth century expression of the negation of political authority, just as the dominance of minorities by majorities is that of our

own day. If tyranny is tempered by anarchy, it is equally true that anarchy is tempered by tyranny.

Perhaps the same truth is less readily recognized in the domain of thought. That "thought is free as air" is one of those pleasant similes which we readily accept because they seem to be so flattering to our self-love. But of the air it is said: "The wind bloweth where it listeth." Is it so of thought? When once one has grasped the demonstration of Pythagoras, is one free to think that the square on the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is *not* equal to the sum of the squares on the sides? Are there any stronger chains than those which logic imposes on the rational mind? We are free to think—so long as we think accurately. We are, also, as we know, alas! able to think wrongly, and we not infrequently make use of that power. But we never do it freely, that is, willingly and of set purpose. We always think in the way which at the time the given data seem to us to demand. In other words, our thoughts are constrained by the authority of facts as well as by that of logic, that is, of their own life. When they are not thus constrained, we call them the play of fancy or the delusions of insanity.

But further. Much as we pride ourselves on our modern superiority to our mediaeval forefathers in this very point of freedom of thought, a little wholesome self-examination reveals to us how easy it is to deceive ourselves in the matter. We are credulous in one way, our forefathers were credulous in another; and neither we nor they would be prepared to confess the credulity. Their oracles were theological, ours are scientific: that is the chief difference. In each case the majority of people have to "take the master's word for truth," just

because it *is* the master's word. Our forefathers, trusting to the evidence of their senses and the authority of their teachers, believed that sun and moon and stars made a daily circuit round a fixed earth. We moderns surely do not yield less to authority in thought when, at the command of our scientists, we disregard the evidence of our senses that the earth is not moving and the heavenly bodies are, and believe the very opposite. Yet, not one in a million of those who accept this truth as axiomatic has reached it by his own free thought and investigation. At the most he has, at the bidding of authority, considered the evidence that has been gathered and marshalled by the master minds. The great mass of people believe it merely because from childhood they have been assured by all who have mentioned the matter to them that it is so.

We have glanced at these things simply to bring out clearly the truth that freedom and authority are inseparable, even in cases in which at first sight they seem to be incompatible with each other. We see that it is only while we take the most superficial of views that we can look on them as opposed forces ; that a little analysis suggests to us that their true relation is quite other than opposition. Nor does it really matter from which of the two extreme terms we begin the analysis. A searching examination into liberty brings us to authority, and a searching examination into authority brings us to liberty. In each case we have then reached not an abstract metaphysical concept, but real, concrete, striving, human life.

So long as we fix our thoughts on one extreme only we are obviously unable to reconcile it with the other ; for each by itself is a mere figment of the imagination—as unreal as is colour apart from form, or form apart

from matter. For, indeed, to think of liberty as absolute and not as correlative with authority, or of authority as absolute and not as correlative with liberty, is to think each as merely negative. Authority then becomes the denial of liberty : it disposes of everything, and the subject is a mere machine ; or liberty becomes the denial of all authority—the assertion that neither from within nor from without is there any determination.

As has been already pointed out, this, in its purest form, is really unthinkable. But, few minds do push their thoughts to their ultimate consequences. Most stop half way, and excuse their inconsistency by calling the abstraction they cannot realize, an ideal. This is to excuse superficiality of thought by confusion of thought. An ideal is always realizable, and always being realized. The ideal of last year is the starting-point of this year. The ideal recedes, because each attainment makes possible the view of a yet farther attainment. But, in all its expanding forms, the ideal is realizable, because it is itself real in its nature : it is concrete, for it embraces the whole of that existence which it idealizes or puts on a higher plane. But, an abstract idea, such as unlimited authority or unrestricted liberty, is not realizable even in thought, because it is not real in its nature. It is not life, but an aspect of life ; and it can no more be realized alone than can the façade of a house exist without the house itself.

Nor is this of merely theoretical interest. For the work of education it is of fundamental practical importance. Education means nothing unless it means the progressive attainment of an ideal of life. To substitute for a true ideal an abstract figment of the imagination vitiates the whole process. So it may even be said that

nobody who has not thought out the true place of both liberty and authority can be a good and successful educator.

To the plain man education seems obviously a process largely determined by authority, and that we know was the accepted view of mankind for many centuries. The exercise of authority was, indeed, plain to see ; and was often expressed in ways unacceptable to us, because unsuited to the spirit of the age in which we live. It does not follow that they were equally unsuited to the age in which they were used : at any rate they evoked no revolt and called forth no general protest. But, be that as it may, it is certain that this authoritative education did not destroy initiative in those to whom it was applied. There was, in the Middle Ages, no lack of original and daring speculation, of astute statesmanship, of dashing military leadership, of commercial and industrial enterprise, of political sagacity, or of effective doing of the deeds of common life. The true evil came later. When the inevitable reaction against the excesses of the pagan humanists of the Renaissance led to a stricter rule over conduct, and when the traditional studies of the schools ceased to evoke desire in the pupils because they were so remote from the real interests of life, and because the method of teaching had become mainly the dogmatic imposition of verbal statements—largely incomprehensible and wholly unattractive—then authority in school both over conduct and over thought became tyranny. And it was tyranny, not because it was strict, or even severe and harsh, but because it opposed itself as a mere dead external obstacle to the will—that is, to the freedom—of the young. It was authority in as negative a form as it is possible to have it.

Now, the imposition of such an authority does nothing to form the lives of those on whom it is imposed. At the most, it regulates action, and may succeed in forming those habits of behaviour and bearing of which the etiquette of the French Court in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was so shining an example. So its most common product may be expected to be the mannequin reacting more or less gracefully to each trivial situation in polite society. Beneath all this another life goes on, and that is apt to be a life of unrestrained impulse and sensuous gratification. But there are stronger souls who rebel from the first against the artificial thwarting of their lives ; who yield at the time but an intermittent and compelled obedience, and who go their own way openly and unrestrainedly whenever the shackles are removed. Of these, too, the eighteenth century offers us striking examples in the course of the French Revolution.

So, in both cases we see that the negative authority of education did not destroy the innate freedom of the human soul ; but it did tend to give it the debased form of negative freedom, that is, the freedom which is limited by no obligations to observe constraints.

It was, however, the artificial conventionality which it had so generally succeeded in imposing on its victims that was the most obvious fruit of eighteenth century education. That education could, indeed, claim with some superficial plausibility that the private excesses were not its outcome, because it had not sought them. Still, it was these conventionalities which provoked reaction ; and, as we all know, the reaction was voiced by Rousseau. Now, as the need for both freedom and authority is inherent in our nature, so that in our lives

we can dispense with neither, it is almost inevitable that reaction against overweighting the balance on the one side should overweight it on the other. This was the error of Rousseau. His conception of liberty was just as imperfect and superficial as was the conception of authority against which it was a protest. To him freedom was merely absence of human interference, and this is the underlying conception of the system of negative education of which he was the prophet. In a passage of first rate importance he writes: "Keep the child in dependence on things only; you will follow the course of nature in the course of his education. Never oppose to his indiscrete desires any but physical obstacles or the punishments which are born from the actions themselves and which he will remember at need; without forbidding him to do ill, it is enough to hinder him. That he can, or that he cannot, should alone stand to him for law."<sup>1</sup>

It is true that Rousseau does not fall into the error of supposing that this would train the child's moral nature: that was reserved for Herbert Spencer. To Rousseau the child thus to be left to the physical world for his training is essentially a physical being. He feels and he perceives, but he does not yet get beyond perceptual thought, and so has no real intellectual interests and no power of grasping moral ideas or of acting from moral principles. It is important to remember this, and to bear in mind that in Rousseau's view, moreover, these higher aspects of our lives are always accidental and unessential. For him, the essence of life is at once perceptual and negative. This he insists on again and again. For example, he says: "He is the most happy who

<sup>1</sup> *Émile*, liv. ii.



suffers the fewest pains, and he the most miserable who enjoys the fewest pleasures. Always more of sufferings than of joys ; that is the common lot of men. The happiness of man here on earth is, then, only a negative state ; we ought to estimate it as the suffering of the fewest ills.”<sup>1</sup> Quite consistently, Rousseau fails to recognize that true life is full of purpose, and ever has its eye fixed on some worthy goal only to be reached after much struggle and strenuous endeavour. For him all such looking forwards is foolishness, if not actual wickedness. “Forethought,” he insists, “is the true source of all our miseries,”<sup>2</sup> and he exhorts us : “Restrict, O man, your existence within yourself, and you will never be miserable. Remain in the place which nature assigns you in the scale of beings ; nothing can enable you to quit it. Kick not against the hard law of necessity, and exhaust not in attempts at resistance the powers which heaven has given you, not that you may widen or lengthen your existence, but only that you may preserve it in such way and to such time as to heaven itself seems good.”<sup>3</sup> In consonance with all this, Rousseau forbids an educator to restrain children for their future benefit, on the ground that by so doing he deprives them certainly of some present pleasure while he cannot be sure that his treatment will have the effect he desires, even if the child lives to grow up, which is itself uncertain.

Now, this attitude of Rousseau towards life is fundamental in his teaching about education as distinct from instruction. About the latter he repeated many wise things which earlier writers had said, and he added some of his own. But the whole of his doctrine of *education*

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

—as set forth in the training of *Émile*—stands or falls with his view of life. And that view is that the highest aim open to man is to get through existence with the least possible amount of personal discomfort. If that be true, the theory of non-interference is justified. For then “each man liveth to himself alone” as far as he can, and his training should fit him to lead such a life. Doubtless, as has been already argued, this abstraction is incapable of realization. So, indeed, Rousseau finds it. He exhorts the tutor of *Émile* to “leave him to himself in freedom; note his actions without saying anything to him about them; see what he will do, and how he will do it.”<sup>1</sup> But why note them? If freedom be simply absence of all determination of conduct from without, what justification is there for even the existence of *Émile*’s tutor? What, indeed, is the excuse for writing the *Émile* or any other book on education? When Rousseau includes under “an education purely negative” the safeguarding of heart and mind from error, he departs from his fundamental principle. Even in his imaginative sketch he is reduced to a compromise, because his conception of liberty does not admit of reconciliation with that of authority. And, as we all know, the absence of interference is only pretended: the tutor determines what *Émile* shall seem to do so freely; but he hides his constant control behind an elaborate apparatus of trickery.

Nevertheless, in such a system there is an appearance of freedom, so that of *Émile* his creator asks: “Does he not feel that he is always his own master?”<sup>2</sup> And this is where the importance of the whole doctrine comes in. What is the effect on a child of feeling that he is

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

always his own master, a feeling impossible to experience without an absolute disregard of the feelings and wishes of others? That he would be self-centred was with Rousseau a desirable result: nothing else accords with his estimate of life and the end of life. But will the training have developed in him a love of freedom, and that strength of character without which nobody can carry out his will, even though no man oppose him? We will seek the answer first from Rousseau himself, and afterwards from one of his enthusiastic disciples. Though we are all familiar with Rousseau's picture of the immediate result which he holds up for our admiration in his description of *Émile* at the age of twelve, still it will be well to have it fresh in our minds. Here it is; or rather the parts of it which are pertinent to our present point: "Speak to him of duty, of obedience, he makes nothing of what you say; command him in anything, he will take no notice; but say to him, 'If you will oblige me in this, I will return the favour some other time,' he will immediately hasten to do as you ask, for he likes nothing better than to extend his domination, and to acquire rights over you which he knows you will esteem as sacred. . . . Work and play are all one to him; his play is his work; he sees no difference. . . . He knows nothing of what is merely routine, custom, habit; what he did yesterday has not the slightest influence on what he does to-day; he never acts on rule, never yields either to authority or to example; he does and says only what pleases himself."<sup>1</sup> That is the young boy; and though it is only a fancy picture, yet it is one which is the logical and, indeed, the inevitable outcome of the course of training which refuses to recognize the weak-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

ness and incompetence of childhood, which teaches the child that his own gratification is his only care, which ignores the whole of the natural bonds which bind him to his family, and through his family to the rest of mankind. Whether he be physically removed from the family, like *Émile*, matters little or nothing. Rousseau's system is anti-social, not because *Émile* lives alone with a tutor, but because all his cares are centred in himself, his whole concern is to secure what seems to him to be his own good. Of this ideal of boyhood at fifteen we are told: "He considers himself without regard to others, and finds it well that others do not think of him. He demands nothing from anybody, and believes that he owes nothing to anybody. He is alone in human society; he relies entirely upon himself." "In a word, *Émile* has all the self-regarding virtues." Surely it is ungrounded optimism to fancy that "to have the social virtues also he has only to learn the relations which demand them; he simply needs the enlightenment that his spirit is prepared to receive."<sup>1</sup>

That being the boy, what about the man? Probably many are not familiar with the later result of his system which Rousseau began to set forth in the *Émile et Sophie*. The book is unfinished, but enough has been written for our purpose. Rousseau's aim was freedom, as absolute as possible. This was the highest good for man, though not, as we learn from his description of the training of *Sophie*, for woman. Who, then, is prepared to find *Émile* in full manhood, complacently shown as quite satisfied to be in slavery in Algeria? But thus the hero soliloquizes: "There is no real servitude but that to nature, of which men are only the instruments.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* liv. iii.

Whether a master fells me or a rock crushes me is in my eyes a similar fate, and the worst that can happen to me in slavery is to be as unable to soften a tyrant as a stone. Moreover, if I had my liberty, what should I do with it? In my present state what more can I wish? Well then! Not to fall into nothingness I must be animated by the will of another in default of my own.”<sup>1</sup> So he draws the conclusion that the difference between slavery and liberty is “more apparent than real.” This outcome of education in freedom for the sake of freedom is sufficiently remarkable, surely, to raise doubts as to the wisdom of the whole scheme, and as to the competence of its author either to guide us in our work of dealing with the young or to teach us to understand that liberty which is the crown of human life.

This, then, is the kind of man the system is designed by its inventor to produce. His essence is that he cannot guide his own life, after all. Like Reuben, he is “unstable as water,” and, like Reuben, such a man “shall not excel.” Few have been rash enough to bring up a child deliberately on Rousseau’s principles, though many, both in the past and in the present, have been deeply influenced by him. But Richard Lovell Edgeworth was one of that few. He tried to bring up his eldest son on the principle of non-interference, but though he had nineteen children, happily for the others he did not repeat the experiment. Of the boy thus left to bring himself up he tells us: “My son was then almost nine years old; he had considerable abilities, uncommon strength and hardiness of body, great vivacity, and was not a little disposed to think and act

<sup>1</sup> *Lettre* ii.

for himself. . . . But I found myself entangled in difficulties with regard to [his] mind and temper. He was generous, brave, good-natured . . . but he was scarcely to be controlled. It was difficult to urge him to any thing that did not suit his fancy, and more difficult to restrain him from what he wished to follow. In short, he was self-willed, from a spirit of independence, which had been inculcated by his early education."<sup>1</sup> The later history of this youth showed that he was wanting in application and steadiness of purpose to the end of his days. In this real case, as in the imagined case of *Émile*, the absence of authority in education led to very imperfect freedom.

Freedom, regarded negatively, is merely absence of interference and opposition. But the interference is always with something positive, and that something is action. To be free means to be free to do. There is no meaning in a freedom to do nothing and to accomplish nothing. Thus freedom is seen to be not an absolute, but a relative, good. It is good to be free, not just because it is good to be free, but because, unless we are free we cannot do what we would. But to do what we would is to carry out our purposes. Thus, freedom is good relatively to purpose. Everything, then, which hinders the carrying out of our purposes lessens our freedom; everything which facilitates the accomplishment of our purposes increases our freedom. Positive freedom is the power of effective doing. It follows that everything which trains children to form high purposes and to seek strenuously to accomplish them, trains them in progressive freedom; everything which lessens their power of pursuing a purpose decreases

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*, chap. x.

their freedom, even though at first sight it may seem to be an expression of it. For we grow in freedom as we grow in stature, in strength, in skill, and in intelligence. There is the fundamental error of Rousseau and all his disciples. They seek man's nature in his innate impulses and tendencies, instead of in the spiritual perfection he is capable of approaching; and they set up that nature as the pattern of life. It was quite consistent with this for Rousseau to maintain that civilization has degraded humanity. So they assert that man is born free, and they condemn all that would interfere with that original freedom.

This is at the root of that vague and unthinking acceptance of the fundamental principle of Rousseau—that interference and authority are in their nature evil as enemies to the child's freedom, and are, therefore, to be avoided as far as possible—which has taken such a strong hold of parents and teachers in these latter years. So we have the fashionable doctrine that everything is to be made agreeable to the child, that his impulses and caprices are to be the educator's sole guide, that he is never to be called upon to do anything distasteful. Like *Émile*, he is to see no difference between work and play, and so, of course, is never to labour for an end even though the present task be disagreeable or even painful. But, in truth, man is born free only in the same sense in which we may say that he is born intelligent, or physically strong and dexterous. He has innate impulses to activity which, if properly trained, may become power of strenuous and persistent pursuit of purposes intelligently formed and morally approved. But, without training, this growth into true freedom will no more take place than will the corresponding development of

mere capacity for thought into a real power of dealing with intellectual problems.

That man grows into freedom, when freedom is thus understood positively as power of effective action, is true both of each individual and of the race. The march of civilization, far from having been the progressive enslavement of man, has been his progressive enfranchisement. All man's inventions and discoveries, by adding to his power to do what he wills, increase his freedom of action. The sea which formerly hindered him from passing from place to place is now his ally; the electricity, which in past ages he knew only as an erratic destructive force, is now the instrument of his will; the rock which defied his puny efforts now falls in fragments because he explodes a charge of dynamite or gunpowder which he has inserted in it. In conquering nature man increases his freedom, as he removes from his path obstacles formerly insuperable. But he conquers nature only on the condition of first understanding, and then obeying, her. Man's inventions are nothing but contrivances to utilize the forces of nature which he has learnt to know. To the laws of those forces he must yield absolute obedience, or again he finds them hindrances instead of helpers. So, as far as regards man's dealings with the physical world, it is plain that increase of freedom in action means increased recognition of the constraint of physical forces. The inventor can no more alter the action of the forces he 'controls'—as we say—than can the unlettered savage. He can turn those forces to his own ends because he can submit himself to their restraint not blindly but intelligently, not because he can disregard them at his own will. In a word, he has attained greater harmony between the spiritual



forces within him and the environment in which they function.

In his dealings with his fellows, man's growth in positive freedom is not, perhaps, so plainly marked, but it is none the less evident when we compare the organization of a mighty modern state with that of a primitive society. That growth is essentially one in co-operative action, in which individual wills are merged in a common will in all that concerns the common end. Remove that co-operation and there ensues a state of civil disunion of which the only outcome is civil ineffectiveness. Or look at the individual rather than at the community. Modern man does, and is able to do, far less for himself by his own unaided efforts, even to maintain his life, than his distant forefathers. Yet it is clear that he lives on a far higher plane. Not only is his physical life more secure and more comfortable, but he can *do* much more ; he can accomplish purposes which the savage cannot even conceive. The more we reflect on the matter the more we see that an individual by himself can do very little, can realize but few of his ideas, can carry out but few of his plans. In other words, by himself he has but little freedom. Just as, to fulfil physical purposes we must use physical means, so to fulfil our human plans we must have human auxiliaries who help directly and indirectly—mainly, of course, the latter.

How false, then, is the view that freedom is essentially an individual independence of others ! “The only man who accomplishes his own will,” says Rousseau, “is he who, in order to do so, is not obliged to use another man's arm in addition to his own.”<sup>1</sup> In other words, as freedom is negatively conceived as simply

<sup>1</sup> *Émile*, liv. ii.

absence of interference, so to him it appears real only when human help is abjured as well as human hindrance avoided. But, expressed in terms of positive freedom, this is to say that man is free in direct proportion to his powerlessness and ineffectiveness. The whole of experience and the whole of history disprove the truth of this. It is by united effort that men do great things, and everyone who conceives a grand idea is led by instinct to seek the association of others in realizing it. Does he feel that in forming his society of helpers he is increasing or diminishing his freedom? Was Mr. Booth more free to carry out his charitable designs before or after he had organized the Salvation Army? There is no need to labour the point; it is too obvious. Everywhere and always men seek, and ever have sought, "to use other men's arms in addition to their own," and that for the very object of increasing their power of freely carrying out their own purposes.

But that which can help can also hinder. Just as physical forces hinder us when we try to act in opposition to their laws, so is it with human forces. All association of men to attain a certain purpose implies the common acceptance of such rules of action as tend to the accomplishment of that purpose. Further, it generally implies that the application of such rules is in the hands of one or more leaders, whom the other members of the society obey. In such obedience do they lose, or do they increase, their freedom? Put thus generally the question is really meaningless, for it assumes mere abstract freedom in concrete circumstances. Freedom to do what?—that is the real question. Evidently the only freedom which should be in question is the freedom to accomplish the end for which the

association exists, and equally evidently, that is increased by the obedience required. So, for example, a member of a religious community vowed to obedience, even though he has resigned the individual and personal control of some of his actions, yet has done so as a means of increasing his freedom to attain what he regards as the main purpose of his life. He no more decreases his total freedom by his action than a merchant who spends money on his business in the hope of getting a greater return decreases his wealth.

All this is evident enough when we think of small societies voluntarily entered in order to attain a desired and clearly apprehended end. But into the great society of the community in which we live we enter by birth, and of its true aims and organization many have but a confused, if not an actually erroneous, idea. Such idea grows up gradually from experience of what people generally approve and disapprove. If we transgress what are called social laws, or even social conventions, we find ourselves checked more or less absolutely ; but in proportion as we act in conformity with them the forces of society are at our service, both positively and negatively. Whether the end and purpose of human life should not be made clear by authoritative teaching is a question into which this is not the place to enter fully. Suffice it to point out that unless this is done many of the actions of that vast majority of mankind which cannot penetrate into the innermost recesses of philosophy must remain throughout life mere blind gropings after the good. But, putting this on one side, we see that the common experience of each one of us teaches that so far from the constraint and regulation of our actions by the approval and disapproval of our

fellows being in opposition to freedom, it is its necessary condition. For, it is not the meaningless and objectless licence to change about like a weathercock, but the unhindered power to carry out our plans and purposes, that we mean by freedom. It is evident, then, that socially as well as physically, we gain in freedom to do what we would in so far as we avoid the hindrance and secure the help of others ; and this means, in so far as our conduct is regulated by principles, laws, customs, and opinions, which prevail in that society independently of our likings and whims.

To the free carrying out of our purposes there are, however, hindrances more fatal than those of physical nature or of human opposition, and those hindrances we find within ourselves. We are all conscious of impulses which make it hard to resolve, and harder still to persevere in executing the purposes in which we are equally conscious that our highest self is finding expression. We all know the person who fails in the struggle, or who even fails to struggle ; who never carries out his purposes, whose life is ineffective and devoid of intelligible meaning. Is that the free man? Why, even in common speech we call him the slave of his passions, or the victim of his weakness of will. The man who *does* things—that is the free man ; for freedom is shown only in successful doing.

Freedom, then, cannot consist in the unchecked acting upon impulse. It comes only through the training of our innate impulses so that they become the servants of our purposes. If they are not so trained they become themselves the masters, and all that is noblest and best in us is under the domination of that ‘many-headed monster’ of appetite, passion, and caprice, which both

Plato and St Paul so earnestly exhorted us to bring into subjection. Let us then enquire by what means man grows into freedom from the bondage of the lower impulses, and of the instability of caprice. Evidently not by giving them the rein and continually yielding to every fresh fantasy ; for here, as elsewhere, habituation increases strength. We need the power of habituation on the other side—the habit of ignoring, as far as we can, the calls of impulse when they conflict with the carrying out of our approved purposes. That is to say, we need to form the habit of inhibition. But, inhibition is constraint—the constraint of our spiritual nature as a whole over our animal nature, and over elements in our spiritual nature itself which are imperfectly organized, and so may be in temporary alliance with our lower impulses. In other words, freedom implies, first and foremost, self-control. But inhibition will not be exercised unless the feeling of duty—that we ought to do this and refrain from that—has been trained and directed within us in our youth. And such direction and training can be found only in the constraint of authority.

Nor is this all. Self-control, or power of inhibition, like all other power, grows gradually by exercise. At first the child has it not. Nor has he the power of forming distant purposes and lofty ideals. His animal life is more advanced than his spiritual life. Look at him as an individual only, and one cannot see how he is to acquire the power of inhibition. But, happily, he is a *human* individual—that is, a member of a community, and, in particular, of certain community groups—family, church, school. Such membership implies more than artificial addition ; it is natural relation, so

that the community is, in a real sense, a part of the individual's life. When, then, such a community exercises righteous constraint, it is not a mere interference with the child's liberty to follow his impulses and caprices; it is an influence upon that higher spiritual self which is at first so weak. But it must be the will, and not merely the outward action, which is influenced, or there is nothing but that abstract negative authority that has already been shown to be inadequate. Though at times it may be necessary to insist on obedience to a particular prohibition or command even against the present expression of the child's will, yet wise authority succeeds in securing the general adhesion of that will.

When the prevailing family or school atmosphere is one of affectionate trust, the constraint is felt primarily as loving care and friendly suggestion, and, being thus felt, the child more and more consciously responds to it, till it is difficult—if not impossible—to say whether in a given case the constraint of impulse is more external or internal. So it will be found that Pestalozzi was right when he wrote: "Exercise all possible care and thought in training the child to proper obedience; duty and obedience will become a pleasure to him."<sup>1</sup> The inevitable opposition between duty and pleasure, asserted by Puritanism and, unhappily, countenanced by Kant, has existence in fact only for those who have been trained to find their pleasure in the immediate gratification of each capricious impulse as it arises. When authority is wisely and lovingly exercised, its external constraint becomes more and more merged in the internal constraint of conscience, till at last the control is predominantly and

<sup>1</sup> *Diary*: see Green, *op. cit.* p. 43.

essentially internal, though, seldom if ever does any one of us feel himself entirely unaided by the sense of the approval or the disapproval of others. Again, then, it is seen that constraint is not antithetical to freedom but essential to it.

Freedom, then, like all our other powers, is capable of development. We are no more born free than we are born strong or wise. Our first trembling steps towards freedom must be guided by others, and such guidance is the constraint of authority, whether it work through fear or through love. As we accept the guidance—that is, the constraint—more and more fully, we make the constraint more and more that of our own will, though always our self-control is aided and made easier by the constraint of society, implicit though it may generally be. That man is most fully free who can most surely work out his purposes, unhindered by weakness within or opposition without ; whose freedom, that is to say, works within a whole system of constraints, unfelt because not opposed, that is, thoroughly accepted.

It follows that to regard the young child as free, and so to look upon all authority and constraint as destructive of freedom, is to misapprehend altogether both the nature of human life and the meaning of freedom. Yet that is the doctrine of Rousseau ; and, though, probably, few who have a clear apprehension of what it involves accept it whole-heartedly, it is certain that from it has grown a suspicion of all exercise of authority, which leads to vacillation and weakness in discipline both in the home and in the school. Parents and teachers are uneasy in constraining children to do or to refrain from doing, and so they avoid it whenever it seems to them possible to do so. They exaggerate the importance of giving free play

to all a child's impulses and caprices, for fear lest they should weaken his power of initiative. They forget that to be always beginning is not the way to be effective. Such a false doctrine, misconceiving the whole nature of human life, cannot but have disastrous consequences in proportion as it is applied in the practice of education. Whewell truly says: "Young persons may be so employed and so treated, that their caprice, their self-will, their individual tastes and propensities, are educed and developed; but this is not Education. It is not the Education of a Man; for what is educed is not that which belongs to man as man, and connects man with man. It is not the Education of a man's Humanity, but the Indulgence of his Individuality."<sup>1</sup> When we appreciate the extent to which the poison of the pernicious doctrine of the free license of impulse has permeated education, we cannot feel that the distinguished French critic, M. Jules Lemaître, pronounces too harsh a sentence on Rousseau, from whom it has been derived, when he says: "Never, I believe, thanks to human credulity and stupidity, has a writer done more harm to man than this writer, who, it seems, did not exactly know what he was saying."<sup>2</sup>

Yet it must ever be borne in mind that the aim of all external constraint is to develop self-control, and that this is only possible when the constraint is felt and recognized as good, either through implicit faith in parent or teacher, or, later, because to this is added some insight into the reasonableness of the command. This soon gives us the true limitation of that constraint which is a handmaid to freedom. It must be loving, clear, and

<sup>1</sup> *Of a Liberal Education*, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Jean Jacques Rousseau*, trans. by Jeanne Mairat, p. 280.



reasonable in itself, and confined to activities into which a question of right and wrong enters. In matters of indifference, constraint is simply tyranny. So we may take as our rule: In things essential, authority; in things unessential, liberty; in all things, charity.

Further, if the young life is too much regulated by the directions of another, the power of self-reliance, which is the very core of freedom, has no chance to become vigorous. Whenever the true relation of constraint to freedom is not grasped, the exercise of authority—be it frequent and strong or infrequent and weak—is bound to be arbitrary, because it is guided by no principle, but is determined by the exigences or by the caprice of the moment. Such exercise of authority is not educative. Nor is the minute and continuous direction of life, involving the decision of authority on every kind of act, educative either; for it fails to leave growing-space for self-direction and self-control, and it equally fails to appear reasonable to the developing boy or girl. The personality, if originally weak, is crushed; if initially strong, it is driven into secret or open opposition and rebellion. That exercise of authority is truly educative which uses constraint only against those impulses which are opposed to the growth of persistence and purity of purpose, and which so uses it as to make it always an expression of a loving relation, not an arbitrary act of caprice or temper. But there should be no shrinking from using it, and when used it should be absolute. An offered opposition, withdrawn upon pressure, is the most dangerous aspect of all weak and ineffective government. And ineffective government in education means preparation for moral shipwreck.

So, we may sum up the task which ever confronts the

educator, and never more insistently than at present, in the words of Pestalozzi: "Freedom is good, but obedience is also good. We must bring together what Rousseau has put asunder."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Diary.*

## CHAPTER IV

### WHAT ARE THE MEANS?

EDUCATION, as here conceived, is the sum of conscious efforts to "bring up a child in the way he should go." It is not a mere drawing out of innate capacities, but both a directing and a pruning process—a strengthening of all that makes for the conceived end, and a weakening of all that is opposed to it. *Educare*, and not simply the more primitive *educere*, is the root of the meaning of the process as well as of its name. It tries to draw out, indeed, but to draw out in a way determined by considerations of what is held to be desirable.

Some such determination cannot, indeed, be avoided, because of the inseparable relation between the individual and the environment in which he lives. In that environment he finds his aims, and seeks guidance towards their accomplishment. Thus, no matter how little direct training he may receive from his elders, the form of his life is, to an indefinite extent, determined by them. This formative influence on the young of the adults among whom they live is inevitable. Education does not create it, but should endeavour to regulate it.

It is the inner spirit, and not simply the outer act, that is to be formed, for the aim of true education is that the child who is trained may grow into the adult who can guide his own steps "in the way he should go." Such

self-guidance implies both will and capacity. What is good must be perceived and desired, then strenuously pursued by means which really tend towards its attainment. This involves intelligent action, and so necessitates both pertinent knowledge and adequate power of constructive and critical thought. Nor would these be effective without such bodily health and strength and skill as the activities of life demand.

So the whole life is involved throughout. The analysis into physical, mental, and moral, activities is artificial ; and neglect to take account of this in training the young cannot but wholly or partially vitiate the process. Such assumptions as that the bodily life is not related to mental or moral vigour, or that morality can be put in a separate compartment from intelligence, in so far as they guide educative practice, tend to distort the life which is being moulded. Physical training is not a mere matter of health and strength and agility of body ; it is a potent means of forming intellectual and moral tendencies, and of making the bodily organism a skilful instrument for the carrying out of our designs. Intellectual training which neglects the body makes for ineffective adult life even if it avoid premature physical breakdown ; that which ignores the claims of morality cultivates the egoist who, regardless of others, seeks what he esteems his own good, only to find it but Dead Sea fruit at the last. Moral training which neglects body and intelligence may produce the anæmic saint or the narrow-minded fanatic, but hardly the man well fitted to act nobly and wisely in all his relations to his fellows.

Education, then, must seek means to cultivate all the aspects of human life in a harmony determined by the end it seeks. In each of its efforts it should regard not

only the apparent immediate end, but the way in which that end makes for the efficiency of the whole. From the broad view of perfection every educative effort should have utility as its aim—that utility which means some enrichment of human life.

A consideration of means must, however, be related not only to the end but also to the beginning of the process of education. To ignore, in training the young, the immaturity of childhood is as great an error as to ignore the need for a clearly conceived end to be sought. Opposite as these errors are in thought, in practice they may easily be conjoined. To leave the determination of his education in a child's own hands is not only to reject the idea of a determinate end, but to assume that he can fashion his own life. His immaturity is recognized, indeed; but it is assumed that his natural instincts are sufficient guide for the stage of life in which he is. This was the teaching of Rousseau, and, though perhaps never put into practice with logical implacability, it is largely acted on, and that in the worst of all ways—in alternation with the exactly opposite doctrine.

Such a theory knows nothing of man's higher spiritual nature, nothing of his real freedom, nothing of the joy of self-conquest, nothing of high and noble aspiration; all these are beyond the range of instinct, and in advance of the immediate life of the child. If education do not point ahead, it must tend to retard the advance of the developing spiritual life. When it is spoken of as formative, the essential meaning is that it helps to determine life by offering ideals and inspiring desires which lead to effort of a certain kind and directed towards a certain end. Formation from without by constraint is ancillary to this: it is the removal of an obstacle to the

free functioning of the spirit—an obstacle found, it may be, in the instinctive self, but which a wise use of outward force may remove.

The immaturity and weakness—spiritual and bodily—of the child is the sole justification of education. But to justify it is to declare the imperative need for it. We read much in some writers of “the rights of the child”: as an immature being its chief right is to be trained into the stature of the perfect man. As was urged in the previous chapter, absence of control means the tyranny of impulse and passion, and no greater cruelty can be inflicted on a child than to leave him to grow up in slavery to his lower nature.

The child has, then, a right to real training and guidance. His elders owe it to him to show him the way he should go and to guide his steps along it. Whenever possible the guidance should be in the form of suggestion and encouragement, but as this implies that some degree of self-control has already been attained, it is evident that the younger the child the more immediate must be the suggestion, and the more frequent will be the call for definite direction. The whole position is admirably put by Fichte: “It is scarcely possible that the right of parents to restrict the freedom of their children should be questioned. I respect the freedom of another man because I must regard him as a morally cultivated being, and must recognise that only as free can he attain the end his reason approves. I cannot be his judge because he is on an equality with me. But I do not regard my child as a morally cultivated being. I see in him a being to be cultivated, and in this I find my duty to educate him. So, to restrict the freedom of my child is to fulfil the same purpose as to respect that of my equal.

“It is the duty of parents to restrict their child’s freedom in so far as he might use it in a way harmful to his education, but no further. All other restriction is immoral, for it is opposed to the end for which it is imposed. That end is the cultivation of the child’s freedom ; and this is possible only when the child is free. Only when his will runs counter to the end of education should it be negated. Will in general children must have, for they are to become free agents, and not will-less machines to be used by others for their own purposes.”<sup>1</sup>

The earliest means of education, then, is direction, and that is the exercise, in some form, of authority. The parent must direct the child while it is too young even to begin to direct itself. So far its responsive obedience has no moral quality, because it is simply the effect of compulsion. From this first stage, therefore, as speedily as possible a beginning should be made with that training towards self-guidance the cultivation of which is the essence of the whole process of education. Here is the most difficult of its practical problems—to find in each individual case where to place the limits of obedience. No definite and specific rules are possible : the decision must be left to the wisdom of each individual. The general principle is that the child should be left free to act without direction whenever such freedom is not likely to hinder his progress towards the realization of his higher spiritual self. When constraint is called for, suggestion in the form of an expressed wish is the parent’s most effective means, for the response of the child to that is voluntary obedience ; that is, the parent’s will is accepted freely as the determinant of action because the child trusts his parents and implicitly accepts their

<sup>1</sup> *System der Sittenlehre*, pt. iii. ch. iii. § 29.

superiority in wisdom and insight. In such voluntary obedience, therefore, the child does freely what is at the same time imposed on him as a law independent of his own inclinations. Of course, when the parent's declared wish coincides with the child's present inclination there is no conscious obedience. Obedience is felt when the child rejects the present inclination in favour of the higher and wider motive of doing what the parent desires, because the parent is implicitly accepted as the rightful judge. Fichte makes the suggestive remark that "if anything proves that goodness is inherent in human nature, it is this obedience."<sup>1</sup>

As the child's intelligence grows, that which is at first but implicitly and instinctively felt gradually becomes understood. So the child finds in his experience justification for his former implicit trust in his parents' love and wisdom; or, it may be, he finds it shaken or shattered. Everything depends upon which of these two convictions is borne in upon him. Will his growing habit of obedience to his parents advance with the recognition and acceptance of a moral law of which they are to him the mouthpiece, or will there be an ever-widening gulf between his love for his parents and his respect for either their goodness or their wisdom or both? For in the latter case the inconsistencies in the parents' commands, and the want of fixed principle in their rule, cannot but become increasingly evident to him. Here we are at the very core of education, and there parents must inevitably be found. On them depends whether the child shall go steadily on from obedience to them, through ever fuller and freer acceptance of the rule of duty, to the pursuit of all that is noble and good

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*



and true—that “service of God” which “is perfect freedom.”

As authority, therefore, is the first means of education, so obedience is the first duty of children, and, as was shown in the previous chapter, throughout life the duty of ever-widening obedience remains as an essential condition of growth in freedom. From the root of obedience spring other virtues, but where it is absent they have no root, for virtue apart from the feeling of obligation to do what is judged right is meaningless. An understanding of what obedience implies and of how best to cultivate it is, therefore, the fundamental need of parents. Similarly, a clear conception of the range and kind of obedience demanded by the end of education in the relation of pupil and teacher is of the first importance to a schoolmaster. Obviously, the two are not on the same footing. Though for certain purposes the law may regard a schoolmaster as being *in loco parentis*, yet that is only a figure of speech, for the bond of natural relationship, which is the root of the matter in the one case, is absent in the other. The family is a natural society, the school an artificial one. Doubtless, in a boarding school many of the elements of the common life of members of a family are present which are absent in a day school, but the inmates are not held together by blood-relationship, and the membership of each in his own family still remains intact, though it may seem to have sunk for a time beneath the surface of life. Every attempt to ignore the differences, and to identify school life with family life, is patently artificial, and so introduces a false note into the relations which prevail in the school in which it is made.

The obedience of child for parent should grow in

character with his growth, taking root in the vaguest feeling, and becoming ever more conscious of itself, rational, and self-chosen. The parent has natural trust and affection on his side, and has simply to avoid shocking and violating them. The schoolmaster, on the other hand, stands in no such primary advantageous position. Recognition of his superior wisdom and of his loving care is not embedded in the very depths of the child's being. He has the positive task of winning trust, not merely the negative one of avoiding its loss. The authority he can rightly exercise is that which is his in so far as he is the delegate of the parent, and that which inheres in his position as the representative of a community which has an end of its own, and therefore, the right to impose on its members such laws and regulations as facilitate the attainment of that end. Such rules, however, are limited in their scope. They relate only to so much of the life of the child as is his life as a schoolboy, and that is not the whole of his life. But no part of his life is outside the sphere of his membership of the family.

Further, the authority of school is much more external than is that of the family, just because the child never feels himself a part of his school in the same sense, or to the same degree, as he feels himself one with his home. The school rule is, therefore, less easily absorbed into the spiritual nature than is that of a wise and loving family. It is apt to affect the manners more than the heart, and to be disregarded when its actual imposition comes to an end. This is, necessarily, more the case with day schools, where the family influence continues in full force side by side with that of the school, and usually overshadows it; but it is true in its degree of all schools, even of those which have the strongest traditions.

It follows that this root of all virtue—obedience—must be carefully cherished in the family, if education is to attain its end. Only when this is the case is voluntary obedience likely to become a powerful spring of action in school. We hear of children who are obedient in school and unruly at home ; but if the unruliness is of the heart and not simply exuberance of vitality, the obedience can be little more than external and temporary. The securing of even such obedience is necessary for the sake of other members of the school, but it has in itself little or no educative power over the individual.

The basis of voluntary obedience we have found in trust. This trust must, therefore, be assumed as the natural and normal relation between educator and child. This consideration at once rejects the idea that a parent should reason with his child as to whether it should obey his commands. Such action implies that the child does *not* trust the parent, but either holds that its own judgment is at least of equal value, or assumes that questions of right and wrong are mere matters of indifferent choice. As a child grows in intelligence it will seek enlightenment on many problems of conduct which it cannot solve for itself, and similar problems may be tactfully suggested when the child's advance in the spiritual life seems to demand it, and then the question of *why?* can be discussed. But no question of whether a command should be obeyed or not should ever be permitted either in family or in school.

As has been said, however, the trust which is the basis of voluntary obedience may be shaken or destroyed by unwise rule. Of such unwisdom superficial expediency is the most prolific cause. Parents and teachers who have never given serious thought to what they desire

their children to become, and the means to attain that desire, give commands on the spur of the moment which either they cannot insist on at all, or which they will shrink—and, in all probability, with justice—from insisting on uniformly. Those who find most frequent occasion to resort to punishment for the enforcement of their commands are just those whose rule is the most incompetent from this very cause of absence of conviction and of principle. Vacillation and alternation of severity and indulgence are antagonistic to the growth of the trustful obedience which promotes freedom. In every way obedience and authority are correlative. The goodness—or badness—of the one implies the goodness—or badness—of the other.

More than kindly and consistent authority, securing willing and regular obedience is, however, necessary if the process of education is to lead the child from obedience to parents to that obedience to the law of God which is “perfect freedom.” The divine law is the summary expression of all that is good and true ; obedience to it means harmony with the ideal of human life. Authority and obedience, as has been said, should not cover the whole of life, but only intervene when inclination prompts the child to do anything that would hinder his spiritual advance. It does not follow that education has nothing to do with the greater part of life. Authority is a fundamental means of education, but not its only means : it is the foundation on which all other means are based : remove it, and the whole structure falls to pieces ; education disappears. Unless obedience pass through its progressive stages neither advice and suggestion nor instruction can bear the fruit education seeks to produce. The increasingly conscious setting of the heart upon

righteousness is the presupposition of any successful process of education.

Granted that, and granted that the inculcation of true obedience is the only way in which this process can be begun, the guiding principle of all other forms of directive effort must be sought in the conception of positive freedom, showing itself in both general and particular efficiency of life. Educational effort is successful in proportion as it evokes desire and effort ; it is justified in so far as it directs that desire and effort towards an approved end. Guidance in life is, therefore, given not only by authority laying down the course to be followed, but by whatever suggests that course, whether directly by example or teaching, or indirectly by the simple holding up of an object to be secured and leaving the person who is being educated to devise the means. The distinction between all these forms of direction is sharp and precise only in an abstract analysis : in concrete practice they continually intermingle. Little effort is evoked unless a desirable object is in view, and the amount of direction required when once that object has become a leading purpose varies continually, and is sought in every available form. Nor is the element of authority absent from most guidance. In all teaching there is authority whenever there is the assertion or assumption of any distinction between right and wrong, true and false. And every piece of advice is a hypothetical direction : If you would attain such a result, follow such a course. But there is no compulsion, and obedience to this kind of authority is markedly voluntary. It has passed from obedience to the command of another to obedience to a law freely adopted by the higher self. Life cannot be divided into compartments in which obedience and free

initiative respectively have unhindered play, and nothing shows more plainly that obedience is not alien to freedom than the willingness of each one of us to follow the directions of another when we are convinced that they will lead to the satisfaction of our desires.

There is, then, in all guidance an authoritative element. But there is also in the response an element of free activity, provided that the end in view is comprehended and desired. Then the guidance also is desired and sought. The separation of constraint from free guidance comes just here: the former is needed when no desire for the immediate end to be sought has been excited: only the latter is required when it has. In the actual practice of schools the former has loomed inordinately large, just because the desires of the pupils to learn the lessons set them, and to obey the rules of the school, have not been aroused. It is evident that much of this compulsion was uneducative, as it remained to the end what it was at the beginning—a mere outward bond of servitude which failed to furnish principles for self-guidance. On the other hand, the disciples of Rousseau, with their sensitive shrinking from compulsion, go to the other extreme, and fail to cultivate self-control, because they leave far too much to the immediate choice—or, rather, caprice—of the child. Locke has well said: “He that has found a way, how to keep up a child’s spirit, easy, active, and free; and yet, at the same time, to restrain him from many things he has a mind to, and to draw him to things that are uneasy to him; he, I say, that knows how to reconcile these seeming contradictions, has, in my opinion, got the true secret of education.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Thoughts concerning Education*, § 46.

The kind of conduct which a child is to follow must be indicated and, if needs be, enforced, by those in charge of his education—by his parents primarily, and secondarily by those to whom his parents partially entrust him. What he is to learn—or, at any rate, to study—must also be decided in general by the same authorities, though in this the school, as embodying expert experience and knowledge, has a more powerful influence—an influence often unwisely exercised in the past, and by no means clear in its promptings in the present. In a broad sense, the community also has a voice in both these decisions. Both the conduct inculcated and the studies recommended or enforced reflect, more or less truly and adequately, the common opinion of the age and country. In whatever proportions these determinants of the form of the education of any individual child, or class of children, are effective, the result is that a scheme is devised by the educative agents, and not by the child to be educated. If there is no such general scheme there can be no education, for then everything is left to chance, and training is absent. The child's freedom, therefore, must be exercised within the limits of the ordained scheme. He must obey the laws recognized as of binding obligation by the society in which he lives, nor do they cease to be laws when, having recognized their truth and wisdom, he accepts them as the private guiding principles of his own life. Simply, the individual will has been harmonized with the common will.

Such laws are necessarily of a very general character, as they are applicable to all conduct. Within their range many purposes may be pursued, and in the choice of these every individual is necessarily a free agent. No one can compel any one else to desire and seek any end

whatsoever. All that can be done is to present or suggest the purpose in as attractive a form, and in as forceful a way, as possible. And both what is an attractive form, and what is superior force, in any one case can only be inferred from knowledge of the individual in question. Doubtless there are classes of incentive which normally appeal to the young at successive ages, and a more exact knowledge of what these are may be reached by extended observation. But within those classes there will be many differences in the stimulating power of particular objects relatively to various individuals.

This is true both in the domain of conduct and in that of learning. One will feel most strongly the glory of courage, another the beauty of beneficence; one will respond to the allurements of literature, another to those of mathematics, a third to the calls of practical work. Whatever the scheme, then, it must, even if drawn out for a single individual, be flexible enough to allow for the free exercise of this relative selection of purposes, and every educator ought continually to bear in mind that in this matter he can only suggest and inspire, and that his ability to do even that depends upon his personal relations with those he is training, and upon the strength with which he himself feels different moral and intellectual incentives.

When the scheme is a common one intended to be applicable to whole classes of the community the need for flexibility, both in its conception and in its application, is yet more imperative. To impose on all and sundry a cut and dried scheme is an exercise of authority in education for which no justification can be found. It assumes uniformity where reality shows endless variety. Its inevitable result is that the majority of those on whom



it is forced find in it but feeble incentives, and draw the real inspiration of their lives from sources outside it. A very rigid and constraining home discipline has often been known to fail to educate the children as responsible moral beings ; a rigid insistence on the learning of set facts has ever failed to inspire in most pupils the desire to know them.

Not only are the same principles applicable to educative guidance in conduct and in learning, but the two cannot be separated. Can virtue be taught? If not, it cannot be learnt ; for teaching is nothing but guidance of the learning of another. If the question be approached from this side it is easier to avoid some dangerous misconceptions. Virtue is seen only in action, and, therefore, can be learnt only by action.

“The moral sense grows but by exercise.”<sup>1</sup>

Morality is skill in conduct, and can no more be acquired without constant practice than can skill in any form of practical activity, such as playing the violin. But it is not mere practice which gives skill. That may simply petrify faults.

“Thought is the soul of act.”<sup>2</sup>

So the practice must be critically examined, that defects may be noted for amendment. Such critical examination takes us into the theory of the activity in which we are attempting to become skilful. But a study of theory apart from the practice will not give skill; and the theory remains apart from the practice, although they may go on side by side, so long as there is no definite appeal to theory to indicate the mode of amending a definite fault or of acquiring a definite excellence.

<sup>1</sup> Browning: *The Ring and the Book*, The Pope, l. 1415.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. : *Sordello*, bk. v.

This analysis gives us the true place and function of definite teaching on moral and religious duties. When the need for it is felt by an individual then its supply is of educative value: it satisfies an experienced want and responds to a definite enquiry. Conceptions of virtues, and rules of duty to God and man, may be expounded without the slightest effect on action. Only when they can be appealed to in order to solve a real moral problem are they effective in determining conduct.

There is in this nothing peculiar to teaching about morality: it applies to all teaching. Only when we feel a doubt do we call on our intellectual stores to help us to solve it by supplying a precedent or suggesting an analogy. When in no perplexity we act on habit, and on impulse and instinct. The more intimate the action is to ourselves—which is practically to say, the more emotional stress it occasions—the stronger are the impulsive forces of instinct and habit, the weaker is mere knowledge to inhibit it. “Impulses vary, in their driving force and in the depth of the nervous disturbance which they cause, in proportion, not to their importance in our present life, but to the point at which they appeared in our evolutionary past. . . . We can only with difficulty resist the instincts of sex and food, of anger and fear, which we share with the higher animals. It is, on the other hand, difficult for us to obey consistently the impulses which attend on the mental images formed by inference and association.”<sup>1</sup>

Men have always been able to see the better while they followed the worst course, and the young are still less governed by intellectual concepts or statements of abstract rules than are their elders. Those whose lives

<sup>1</sup> Graham Wallas: *Human Nature in Politics*, pp. 40-41.

are determined mainly by intellect and logic are, indeed, a small minority even among men whose intellectual culture has been the most extended. Those who have learnt more from life than from books act on a mass of motives and feelings aroused by the situation as a whole, and allowing in an instinctive kind of way for peculiarities of which the strict application of logical principles would take no account. Not explicit theoretical knowledge, nor power of rigid reasoning, is the chief determinant of conduct among adults, and still less among children. To the majority of people of all social classes, and to every child in every class, what Messrs. Reynolds and Woolley say about the ordinary working man is entirely applicable. "He acts much on impulse and on the inherited impulses which go by the name of instinct; and his impulses and instincts are powerful in action according as they are primitive, and have been acquired by his race far back in its evolutionary past."<sup>1</sup>

To give unsought information about moral questions which are closely connected with natural instinct—such as those of sex—is to neglect this law of mental life, and to forget that the inevitable tendency of a deliberate direction of the attention of the young to such matters is both to evoke the instinct and to strengthen it by setting the mind to dwell upon ideas connected with it. To insist that purity is a law of God, and a duty both to others and to ourselves, is one thing: to give more or less detailed information on the physiology and hygiene of impurity is quite another. The one sets a positive rule in its context in the spiritual life and absorbs it into the general religious motive: the other treats of a nega-

<sup>1</sup> *Seems So!* ch. 14.

tive rule in more or less isolation from the spiritual life, and in close connexion with the material life. To warn privately an individual seen to be in moral danger, and bound to the educator by strong bonds of personal affection and trust, and to give collective instruction and admonition to a whole group of children or adolescents, with at least some of whom no such close personal relations exist, are quite different things. Similar considerations are of weight in other cases where impulse or instinct is the motive-force of temptation. The fostering of love of God and of neighbour is a positive thing, but one not to be accomplished by precept. Suggestion through personal character and influence and through the general atmosphere of the educative community is alone effective.

Intellectual comprehension of doctrines of morality and religion is, then, operative educationally only when they are taken up as guiding principles into the spiritual life, and become identified with personal experiences and purposes. Without this they are only verbal, and not real, knowledge: they may be talked about, but are not practised. Nor does the power to talk of them give the power to practise them at will, any more than power to describe the structure of a violin and the way in which it should be played gives the power to play it. Power to act—that is, skill—comes only through intelligently considered and criticized practice.

This distinction runs through everything we learn. The common separation of subjects of study into 'real' and 'verbal' has no justification. It is not in the matter studied, but in the mode of study, that the distinction holds. Any subject is a verbal one to a learner whenever his vocabulary outruns his ideas. Whether those ideas

are of his own conduct, or of the chemical action of one substance on another, or of a law of physics, or of a proposition in geometry, if his words express no real thought his knowledge is merely verbal. Of course, strictly it is an abuse of terms—though one sanctioned by the custom of schools and examinations—to call such psittacism ‘knowledge’ at all. Such sham knowledge can give no guidance in life, and, therefore, it has neither cultural nor utilitarian value. It is mere lumber—the erudition of the pedant which never leads to anything beyond itself. It has, therefore, no part or lot in true education, however large it may loom in what commonly goes under that name. Here, as elsewhere, it adds much to clearness of thought to insist that not all efforts intended to educate really do so, but only those which actually have a share in shaping positively the life of the individual whose education is in question. Possibly no efforts directed towards a group are really educative in the case of every member of that group. However wide an objective our efforts may have, effective education remains, and must ever remain, an individual work, and that simply because each person lives his own private life with his own purposes and aspirations.

A child, then, is educated just as far as in some way he himself acts in the process, and no further. So it is true, though it is not the whole truth, that all education is self-education. In so far as the would-be educator inspires to effort for some end felt to be of worth, he is a real educator. That is to say that the universal feature in all true education is the cultivation of the power to work ; for work is nothing but the putting forth of effort to secure a return esteemed worthy of it.

Power to work, however, does not come by wishing

for it: it needs, above all else, the support of habit. To train this habit in the young is the true justification of constraint in all that is not directly connected with questions of moral right and wrong. Therefore, schools are not only justified in constraining their pupils to work at their lessons, but they neglect their duty if they fail to exercise this constraint. Habit enables all of us to do much work to which we feel no special attraction, and the result of which is not sufficiently desired to prompt us by itself to the effort. Indeed, this is probably the character of the greater part of the work of the majority of men, and it tends to become more so as they advance in life. Habit, rather than enthusiastic desire, then carries them on. But, then the habit has strengthened with years, and the enthusiasm has waned, relatively if not absolutely. In childhood, the habit of work is but just coming into being; it has to be nourished and strengthened in every possible way. But it grows in proportion as it is exercised, and frequent exercise is a matter of choice. So that tasks which are done only under compulsion do little to form the habit of work; those which are accepted as really worth doing are practised both more frequently and with greater intensive effort, and they gather round themselves many and varied delightful feelings of conquest and satisfaction of inclination. In the former case, the motive force is external to the task itself: it may be desire to please parent or teacher, to win a reward, to surpass others; or it may be fear of punishment; or, again, it may be merely dull and apathetic acquiescence in the mysterious ills of life—a kind of juvenile fatalism. Whatever it is, it does not involve any liking for that particular kind of work, and it does not inspire effort to do it as well as possible, but

only to make the most specious appearance possible—often a very different thing.

None of this is educationally worthless, for in life as we know it all such motives have a place. But were it all like that the lot of man would be indeed unhappy. There is for all something better—some real hope and allurements for which to strive for its own sake. And it is just there that we find life really worth living. Naturally men strive for more of this, for this is felt to be increase of life. And it is this which inspires the learner in the latter case—when the task is in itself acceptable because it is a means to an end felt to be in itself desirable. Then the desire to know is operative: in the former case the desire is only to appear to know.

In constraining pupils to work, then, the positive constraint of free choice and felt worth is more efficacious than the negative constraint of external compulsion. The more the latter is kept in reserve, or unostentatiously conjoined with the former, the better the result. For, never let it be forgotten, it is not what a schoolboy can write in answer to examination questions, but what he can do with his life in the world, which is the test of his education as a whole, and of his school training in so far as that has contributed to the result.

The boy, however, is not by instinct a consistently strenuous coadjutor in his own education. He may like his work, but is seldom averse from a holiday. This, too, is good, for in the free activity of the holiday the boy—like the adult—feels that he is getting more of life, that he is enjoying a fuller and richer experience, because he is himself determining his actions and pursuits. Yet, when the work demanded by family and school is felt to be worth doing, the boy—again like the adult—is quite

willing to return to it. Without expressing it to himself he implicitly recognizes that work adds zest to holidays, and that on each successive holiday it is a self richer in capacities of living that has resulted from his work. He may feel this generally and very really, if quite vaguely, and yet it takes little to evoke the volatile liveliness and frivolity natural to his stage of development. To learn to work means to learn to keep such impulses within reasonable bounds. In other words, it means to learn to concentrate the mind on the task in hand. This is the most important formal lesson the school can teach, and school has much greater opportunities for teaching it than has the family.

Our own experience shows us that such concentration is most easy when we are strongly drawn towards the work in hand, and when the doing of it demands some practical activity on our part. For example, it is easier to keep the thoughts from wandering when one is writing than when one is listening. In the former case one dwells on what seems to oneself to be important, and constructs the means to carry out the purpose of expressing one's own thought clearly. In the latter case the course and rate of thought are determined, and all that is asked of one is to follow intelligently the working out of the ideas of another. No doubt, this latter is necessary. We should make but small advance did we not receive the thoughts of others. But we make equally small advance if we simply receive them, or even store them up for future exhibition. Only in so far as we re-think them for ourselves, and find their bearing on our own problems, do we benefit from ever having heard them. We only trouble, however, to worry over the thoughts of others when we can see—dimly, it may be—



that they are likely to help us in our own thinking about what we feel concerns us.

Children, then, are trained in mental concentration in proportion as they are kept mentally active by a definite object. Having but immature minds and very small experience, they need the help of suggestion, and the stimulus of definitely raised problems, to take up into the living streams of their lives the ideas which they find in books, or which are presented to them by word of mouth. This, then, is the most important part of their intellectual growth, and to this all imparting of information is subsidiary, and should be ancillary. Not what has been presented, nor what is reproduced, but what has been so assimilated that it can be used intelligently, is the measure of what has been taught. The memory which teaching should most try to strengthen is the power of effective use. The talent put out at usury, not that hidden in a napkin to be exhibited on demand, is the true image of the educative function of learning.

Children will learn to concentrate their minds on the task in hand—that is to say, to work—in so far as they are encouraged to do what seems to them worth doing, not simply because it is enjoyable in itself, but chiefly because it enables them to get something they want. That something is conscious power. As childhood is left behind, therefore, it becomes less possible to draw a hard and fast psychological line between work and play. Play has its end in present enjoyment: work looks beyond itself. But in many a game a boy works hard to acquire a skill which is, it may be, the chief desire of his life. His 'play' is then his real work. Yet, from the point of view of life the game is not work, because it produces nothing outside itself. When the relation

between the activities which enrich life and the recreation which stimulates it is grasped by the youth, the relatively greater importance of the former becomes manifest to him. Precept will not do this, nor will compulsion. The great attraction of skilled play is that it does lead to something worth having—to a power which it demands much persistent effort to acquire. Its glamour is much more in this sense of effectiveness than in any immediate enjoyment, though that also may be very keen owing to the free bodily exercise the game involves.

For such activity the growing boy has an almost insatiable desire; for the consciousness of increasing skill and power his need is equally imperative. No matter to what social class a child belongs by birth and training, he is still a young human being with the primeval impulse to do things with his bodily members, and to do them well. If gratification of those impulses be offered in no other way it must be found exclusively in games, or in less desirable forms of physical action which at least accomplish something. The obvious educative outlet, in addition to games, is by various forms of constructive work, in which energy is consumed, skill is acquired, and a desirable product results. Here is the rational antidote to over-estimation of games. Ordinary lessons will never provide a counter-attraction, because they do not respond to the same natural demands.

Yet here again it is essential that the work should be the individual's own work, and it is not his own work if he simply carry out the directions of another. He is willing enough to accept such directions when he feels the need of help: he never objects to the instructions of his coach in cricket. But unless he be engaged in constructing something 'out of his own head,' or in prac-

tising an operation which he sees to be necessary to such construction, it is not *his* work, and has for him but little attractive force. There are many boys and girls who do most of their thinking in close connexion with the work of their hands, and all do a considerable part of it in that practical way.

We have seen, moreover, that it is easier to acquire the power of continued application when one is actively employed. So here, too, practical constructive work makes a strong claim to recognition as a means of education. In years of boyhood and girlhood the natural instincts demand such expression most strenuously, and through it the educative aim of bringing the will of the child into active co-operation with that of the educator is most surely secured.

The question, however, of whether such occupations will be regarded as real work or as play, on the same level as cricket or hockey, is an important and a difficult one, and one which leads us into the very heart of the problem of what children should be set to learn. To acquire the power to work and to keep on working intelligently is the primary aim, but in itself it is formal. It is a valuable asset in whatever line of life is afterwards entered, but it does not give insight into the requirements of any special mode of action. Each occupation has to be learnt, and to learn well demands the habits of application and of intelligent criticism of effort. So much, it may be said, educative work of any kind will give. But we have insisted that behind this must be the spring of desire, and that the stronger the desire, and the more directly it bears on the task itself, the more successful and educative is the effort. Speaking broadly, the educational desires of any social class are in relation to the

conventional standards of value in that class. Children from their earliest years live in homes and move in social circles in which it is continually taken for granted, both in act and in speech, that certain things are worth doing and knowing, and certain others are not. This is the positive side of the influence. But there is an equally pervasive negative side. It is equally taken for granted that the occupations and interests of a class lower in the social scale have in them something debasing, while those of a higher class are looked at with distrust and suspicion, even if with some envy.

Thus the appeal of any subject to be learnt is likely to be different to children of different social grades. Though all have the same natural instincts, yet long before the age of school lessons these have grown accustomed to find exercise and satisfaction in diverse ways, and to tend towards diverse ends. Tastes and aptitudes and points of view have been developing from the cradle, and constantly finding sustenance in family and social life. In every English school some one social grade preponderates, and in most schools it is exclusive, so that this distinction of values in harmony with the opinions and prejudices of various social classes is inherent in all actual scholastic education. This affects directly, though in a way impossible to state in explicit terms and doubtless to varying degrees, the response of the pupils to the opportunities offered them. Thus, to the extent to which the more prosperous social classes regard manual labour as an inferior type of human effort, and assume that men who work with their hands are on a stage of civilization lower than their own, the children of those classes are apt to look upon all manual occupations in school as an inferior form of play, and generally to feel little or

no inspiration to attain skill in them. They have not been regarded at home as part of a liberal education. So the boys will probably be almost ashamed to become good workers in wood or iron, unless such work is very directly connected with their own lives and interests, and has in it no appearance of apprenticeship to a trade. Any suspicion that it is meant to make them proficient as manual workers is likely to be fatal in many cases, but the idea of making things they themselves want is a different matter. The manual work is still not regarded in the way in which it is regarded by children of the industrial classes, but it is something more than play, and it may have the happy result of convincing some boys well endowed with riches that though such work may not be necessary to gain a livelihood it may yet be worth doing for the very solid satisfaction it brings. For it must be remembered that among all classes are to be found children of a very practical turn of mind, who will do either some form of physical work or no work at all that is worth mentioning. Capacity for intellectual or æsthetic culture is not an invariable accompaniment of well-filled pockets.

This class attitude towards various studies is operative throughout. Mr. Herbert Spencer thought it absurd that a boy of the upper classes should be taught Latin "simply in conformity to public opinion . . . that he may have 'the education of a gentleman'—the badge marking a certain social position, and bringing a consequent respect,"<sup>1</sup> and he himself proceeded to enquire "What knowledge is of most worth?" in a community permeated by material civilization and largely engaged in commercial and industrial pursuits. However cogent

<sup>1</sup> *Education*, ch. 1.

his arguments may be as to what knowledge is required in the nation, they do not touch the question as to what should be taught to individuals ; and it is individuals—not communities—that have to be taught. Many of his examples illustrate the advisability of seeking expert advice, and consequently imply the need of specialization. Putting this on one side, the refusal to recognize the bearing of the public opinion of his social circle on the kinds of things a boy or youth is willing to learn can only be explained on the assumption that teaching is held to be a matter in which the person taught is indifferent to what he is taught—an assumption utterly at variance with the doctrine that teaching is the systematic culture of the mental powers preached in a later chapter of the same book. For the mental powers with which the school has to deal are not abstract and empty forms, but dynamic forces tending in certain directions and confined to certain paths, and these directions and paths are those approved by the common opinion of the social class in which childhood has been passed.

Desire and effort are inspired by that which is seen to be pleasantly or usefully related to the actual life. The young do not look far ahead, and as far as they do look it is down a vista of a similar general nature to that of their past experience seen in memory. The question of what to teach in order to give those taught the greatest possible number of fruitful incentives cannot, then, be answered simply by a consideration of the contents of the various branches of knowledge. The mode and extent of the relation of such knowledge with the actual and the probable future lives of the pupils should also be taken into account, or again the fundamental error is made of assuming that life is formed by environment

and has no share or lot in choosing from among the possibilities before it what shall really become part of itself. Or, to put it in another way, incentive is found, not when something is simply offered for acceptance, but when the dynamic forces which have grown up in life are already attuned to that kind of object. Incentive is a relation between cognate terms.

If, then, nothing in the actual life of a boy predisposes him to desire the kind of teaching offered him by his school it is unlikely that he will become keen about it, or, if he do, that the interest will live long. Of course, it is not meant that everything that fills a boy with desire has been spoken of at home as worth having. There may be springs in every heart which remain hidden till some new experience calls them forth. But, speaking generally, the new experience is most likely to be an awakening one when it is at any rate of the same general kind as those which are accepted as worth having in the boy's social circle. Further, a newly felt desire requires nursing, and in ordinary minds is easily crushed by want of sympathy. The boy or girl needs the support of such sympathy, and seldom puts forth much effort when it is withheld. Interest in a new subject of study is, however, encouraged out of school only when it is one which meets with out-of-school approval. The subject which is scouted by parents or friends, or by the public opinion of the pupils freely expressed outside the class-room, will be seriously studied by very few.

Hence, for the sake of their own work the schools would do well to regard the feelings and aspirations of the social class from which their pupils are drawn. Only to the extent to which they do so are their exertions likely to affect the main current of the children's lives,

arouse in them permanent interests, enlarge their sympathies, and raise their standards of value. As conditions of life change, aspirations are modified, not so much in essence as in form. What is taught in schools should be modified, too, in harmony with such changes in the direction of public life. Tradition should not count absolutely, but only relatively in so far as the change in public attitude is slow or rapid. A course of school study which broke as absolutely as possible with the past would be as much out of relation with actual life as one which obstinately refused to admit any change. Adjustment is never revolution, but always the change of the permanent in school in relation to the change in the permanent outside.

So long as the common conception of knowledge was that it was something to be acquired from the past, and that the task of the learner was to gather and store the thoughts and opinions of the wise men of old, the task of determining what to teach was a simple one. The outlines of the contents of a liberal culture were accepted everywhere through many centuries. Attention was then directed towards the perfecting of a method of imparting that knowledge which assumed throughout the unquestionable authority of the old masters of thought. Very successfully was the task completed, and the mediæval scholastic method was a very perfect instrument for what it was designed to accomplish. It trained the power to make use of authorities to support theses of all kinds. It is, indeed, the best example of formal mental discipline recorded by history. Its very success led to its own destruction, and that because no essentially formal training could permanently satisfy the aspirations and longings of the spirit of man. The habit of ques-



tioning theses and weighing arguments was at the disposal of human curiosity to learn more about man and the world, and the outcome of the mediaeval system was that while mediocre minds became dull pedants the choicer spirits burst the bonds placed by the accepted authority of the past on the thought of the present. This was inevitable as soon as the re-discovery of forgotten writings of the revered age was found to raise again problems which tradition had buried. The spirit of questioning was aroused, and was insatiable. That spirit is the essence of the modern thinker's attitude towards learning, in which all results of human thought, or at any rate the formulas which express them, are regarded as, more or less, always on their trial.

This questioning, and in a sense sceptical, spirit has permeated the various classes of the community to different degrees and in different ways. Credulity—or acceptance of statements without evidence, and simply because they are commonly received—marks the great majority of mankind, if not the whole of it, in subjects outside the range of their own active interests. But within that range a spirit of sceptical enquiry is at work. Still, it leads to unsatisfying results so far as it is uninformed and under the sway of prejudice or passion. Among the working classes, for example, the questioning spirit is very active in all matters of social and economic relations. The questioning is largely a groping in the dark, and whatever promises to throw light on such problems is welcomed, provided there is awakened no suspicion that the ideals and prejudices of another class are being imposed on them as truths. The schools for their children would, then, most readily fit their work into the actual current of working-class life if they related

it to social and economic interests. These are wide enough to cover all that it is desirable to attempt to teach. History, economic and historical geography, and literature, show the spirit of man dealing with the problems of life in practice and in theory, and so have a social reference throughout. But it is the real history of social life—the aspirations and struggles of peoples and classes for ends desired, though not always clearly conceived, the advance of man's conquest of nature—not political or constitutional records, nor the loves and hates of monarchs, that furnishes the kind of material needed. The result desired should be widening and deepening ideas, ever growing in justice, as to the inter-relation and inter-dependence of classes in all times and places, not a knowledge of 'facts' which could with equal profit be taught to parrots or magpies.

The method of teaching should be in harmony with the end sought, which is the giving of greater cohesion, point, and clearness, to thought on those social questions—of morality, of relations of classes, of the effects of Acts of Parliament, of the conflicting policies offered for their acceptance at the polls—which are the chief interests of the working-classes outside the economic questions concerned with earning as good a living as possible, which of necessity rank first with them, but which intermingle in all sorts of ways with social questions.

Whatever promises to fit a child more efficiently for earning money will always be welcomed and valued by parents and friends who know but too well the constant strain of living and supporting a family on a weekly wage which illness or accident may at any time intermit. So it is that in working-class circles good reading and writ-

ing and correct working of straightforward sums related to every-day transactions are valued. "'Tisn't what you learns to school as helps 'ee, not wi' the likes o' us, so long as you can read an' write an' reckon a bit, an' speak up for yourself ; 'tis experience—seeing life an' what 'tis like, an' thee casn' see too much o' it too early'' says one of the working men whose views of life are so frankly expounded at first hand in *Seems So!*<sup>1</sup> So long as this reproach is generally felt to be just by working class parents, so long will they fail to value the elementary schools, and will withdraw their children from them at the earliest permissible age, irrespective of whether or not they have found suitable occupations for them. But if the elementary schools, instead of borrowing the ideals of the secondary schools, themselves largely a reflex of those of the great public schools, would frankly accept as their starting-point the ideals of the classes for whose service they exist, the reproach would be removed, the confidence of the home circle would be gradually gained, and, as a consequence, the desire of the children to learn would be so increased that much more could be taught in the same time than is now found practicable. To lengthen school life for working class children will be of no avail and will only arouse the antagonism of the parents unless what the school offers meets what the children desire, and that largely reflects what the parents think worth having. Forms of manual training, determined by the common occupations of the district, should hold an important place in every elementary school. But the teaching must be such as aims at ingenuity and initiative, as well as at executive ability. So only can it train the intelligent workman. But the boy who

<sup>1</sup> Ch. 5.

works intelligently also thinks intelligently, at least in one department of life, and is consequently more able to distinguish and reject unintelligent thinking on other matters within his experience.

The power to sing, to draw, to enjoy good stories, is inherent to some degree in all, and such occupations cover the most usual means of adding pleasure to leisure. A sympathetic teaching of them will win the general approval of parents, and inspire effective working interest in the pupils, when once the work of the school as a whole appeals to those concerned as useful to the children. Indeed, it is only the limited use of the word which prevents people in general from calling such acquirements themselves 'useful.' Nevertheless, they are felt to have value.

A similar satisfaction of the natural curiosity of children, and a like acquiescence on the part of the home, awaits rational teaching about natural phenomena, so long as what is taught is rather how to learn than strings of statements about matters which can be seen and thought out by the children themselves.

It appears, then, that nominally the studies of elementary schools need little revision, except that manual work should play a much more leading part than it now usually does. History, Geography, Literature, Reading, Writing, Spelling, Composition, Nature Study, Drawing, Music, all have a legitimate claim to inclusion. But those names may cover what is held worthless by all connected with those to whom it is offered, or what is felt by them to be valuable. And unless appreciation be secured the attempts of the school to teach can have but little educative value. The unfavourable opinion voiced in *Seems So!* appears to be widely held, and the reason

given is certainly the true one. "It offers the neatest possible example of the folly of trying to force upon one class the standards and ideals of another."<sup>1</sup> "It has been assumed that the artisan is but a stunted and distorted specimen of the small tradesman ; with the same ideals, the same aspirations, the same limitations: demanding the same moulding towards the fashioning of a completed product."<sup>2</sup> So long as different classes have different ideals, how can it be otherwise while the determination of what elementary schools shall do is wholly in the hands of men who are imbued with the standards of the higher classes and have never doubted the excellence of those standards for all mankind?

That it is desirable from every point of view to bring about a greater understanding and sympathy between the great working classes and the 'higher' classes against whose supremacy and direction they chafe more and more is undoubted, and to do this means to soften the lines of demarcation between their ideals. But to make the mass of the people dissatisfied with the schooling provided for their children, and to compel them to accept it whether they judge it good or bad—especially when that schooling proudly, though unjustifiably, arrogates to itself the name of 'education,' and so in word seems to deny the right of parents to train their children—is surely a way to widen the breach, not to close it. It adds to the conviction that the directing classes are but blind guides, and awakens the suspicion that the blindness may be only assumed, and that the rulers are more knaves than fools, seeking their own class interests. So their attitude towards life's values is suspected and

<sup>1</sup> Ch. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. 20. quoted from Masterman : *The Condition of England*.

rejected, and class antagonism becomes more intense and narrow.

The problem of what will provide the most fruitful incentives, and therefore should be taught in schools for the middle classes, engaged in various grades of commercial and industrial life and in professional life, is in one way easier and in another way more difficult than is that of the working-class school. Home opinion is less critical of what the school offers, especially if it be the traditional fare, so that active opposition is not likely to be generally encountered. At the same time the intellectual apathy of many homes predisposes their children to regard school work as a bore, while the more frequent opportunities for amusement act as a constant distraction, and so increase the tendency to slackness. Moreover, the different aspirations and needs of the various sections of the middle classes render it difficult for schools to meet fully the requirements of any. In towns the remedy for this latter disadvantage might well be the provision of several types of school, each of which would adapt itself as closely as possible to the aspirations of some one section. Such a distinction would also tend to separate into different schools pupils who leave at different ages to follow different pursuits. The children of professional men would generally be preparing for a course at a university or other place of higher instruction, and any pupils from other classes who were also intended so to prolong their preparation for life would naturally find their place in the same schools. For them the home has conceived the ambition to lift them above its own social grade, so that the fact that a more advanced course is proposed for all is evidence that broadly similar aspirations in regard to the children prevail in all the

homes. It would tend to efficiency if no other pupils were admitted to such schools, and if as a result the numbers were small the cause of education would not suffer. Such pupils should be so taught that as they pass through youth they should more and more be able to learn by themselves, which implies that they should have both the desire to extend their knowledge in some definite sphere and cultivated skill in doing so.

This would render practicable also as much differentiation of study as the youth of the pupils render advisable. Interest in social and economic questions and in the artistic recreations of life should be present here as in schools for the working classes, while interest in more detached realms of intellectual culture, which can at the most be awakened by schools whose pupils leave at thirteen or fourteen, can and should be made wider and deeper in schools which retain their scholars several more years. The whole realm of intellectual interests, however, is too wide for anyone to be at home in all parts of it, and this explains the need for specialized interest. This is a need, not only imposed from without by the wealth of matter, but also felt from within, as, for some reason or another, greater value is given by an individual student to some forms of learning than to others. But, before such a call can be genuinely felt the whole field must have been broadly surveyed. So only can breadth of outlook and variety of interest be retained, and these are indispensable to a sane culture. Nobody in our day can be said to have a really liberal intellectual culture who is ignorant of any of the great domains of human thought. The student of the 'humanities' must know the general trend of 'scientific' thought and speculation, or he is out of touch with even the 'humanistic' move-

ment of the day ; while the student of the physical and natural sciences cannot afford to be ignorant of the religious, social, and economic, questions which agitate men's minds, and which involve a knowledge of history and literature. Schools of all grades, according to the time and opportunity given them, are homes of liberal culture to the extent to which they adapt this wide outlook to that of the boys and girls they teach.

Schools of a different type—or, rather, of several different types—are needed for the children of the commercial and industrial classes who are intended to enter pursuits similar to those of their parents. Here the same general principles are operative, but the actual subjects offered are likely to furnish incentives in proportion as they have a recognizable relation to the interests current at home, which constitute the intellectual atmosphere in which the boy passes his out-of-school life, and to the projects and aspirations which have grown out of that spiritual environment. The orientation of any subject should not conflict with that of the minds to which it is offered. There is always a danger of being misled by a fallacy of ambiguity in these matters, so as to think that the study of any subject—e.g. History—is always and necessarily of the same character because it has the same name. In truth there are many aspects of every subject according to the relation to human life and effort which is made the directing force of the study, nor can it be said that any one is, in itself, more liberalizing than another. That mode of entry into any subject does the most for culture which opens to the individual mind the widest and highest vistas of life.

To what extent more direct technical teaching should be given to those who desire it in an upper department



of a school is a matter of convenience. Whenever such teaching is called for it should be available either in special schools or in technical additions to ordinary schools. But the principles that specialization should grow out of a wide survey of possibilities, and should answer to a felt need, are as operative here as in schools where the specialization has a less immediate application in the real affairs of life.

A general survey of history should, for example, precede the study of any special periods or topics, and, on the other side of life's interests, a general view of the natural world should be the root from which the study of any particular science should spring. It is the general nature of the world as it actually appears to the child that should first be made intelligible to him, and this cannot be done by dealing with one of its abstract aspects. The aim should be that from the first it may be viewed by the child as a concrete whole which limits his actions on all sides, and which he can make an instrument of his will only by understanding it and acting in conformity to the laws which govern it. But all the specific sciences are highly abstract. Chemistry, for example, is concerned with certain modes of reaction which in the real world are always found combined with other reactions which form the subject matter of other distinct branches of physical science. So, although the sciences deal with concrete things, they deal with them abstractly ; and to study one or two sciences gives but a very partial and inadequate view of the actual course of events in nature. The study of them should, therefore, be the response to enquiries raised in the mind by a more concrete and general study which investigates typical natural phenomena on every side. In such study

we take nature as we find it ; we do not abstract from this or that process as not belonging to the special science in hand. We make a kind of cross-section through the sciences, but in doing so we get a true and intelligible picture of nature as it is ; we view it as a whole, and we discover in it system and mutual dependence. Such study, carried out with some considerable thoroughness, should precede all investigation of separate departments of natural science ; for those are, after all, but artificial distinctions made for the convenience of advanced investigation. Only through such a course can specialization rest upon a basis of culture, or avoid giving prejudiced and distorted ideas of value.

Nor should the study of nature be divorced from that of human effort. It should not confine itself to leading the pupils to learn what investigation has taught mankind, but it should connect that learning with that investigation. "Scientific truths are battles won" said Descartes. Let those battles be described. Let the young student hear of the arduous toil of the discoverer—watch his progress, share his hopes, be downcast by his failures, rejoice in his triumphs. Are not his victories as interesting as those of the soldier, and of infinitely greater moment to mankind? How is it that the history commonly taught in schools pays little or no attention to the former and revels in the latter? Surely, the only answer is that it is the influence of a bad tradition, dating from an age when science had not yet begun her triumphant march. Yet, instead of examples of unscrupulous ambition, fruitful in inflicting untold ills on its victims, of hatred and fraud, and of frequent futility—a fearful panorama even when relieved by pictures of noble heroism and unselfish loyalty—what

models of self-restraint, of patient and untiring perseverance, of simple and disinterested love of truth, does the history of the advance of science present! How much more, too, are its results seen and felt in contemporary life! Who can compare in importance the permanent influence on mankind of any war, or of all the wars which have devastated the world, with that of the invention of the steam-engine or of the electric telegraph? Teaching on such subjects, then, comes home to the young. It gives them greater understanding of the things amid which they live, it arouses admiration for the less showy but more fruitful arts of peace, the arts in which they themselves will take some part. It shows man engaged in conquering nature—in wringing her secrets from her, in using those secrets to harness her to his chariot wheels. It shows him, in short, fulfilling his destiny, and bending his environment to his will. So it unifies the young student's growing knowledge, helps him to see that man and nature are together constituents of that world in which he, too, is a living force, who though he can do little yet can do it nobly. Thus accustomed to look at the history of the past he then may learn also how men have ever been prone to spend their force in internecine strife, and he will, while admiring the heroic virtues which war calls forth, yet see it in its true perspective, and largely stripped of its glamour. So he may learn, while sympathizing with those who fight for freedom and to resist attack, to look upon successful aggression on another nation as far less noble than successful attack on the secrets of nature, and in the end, infinitely less profitable.

The school tradition of the highest classes is strong

and conservative, and lays it down that school is less concerned with learning than with the training of personality, and that boarding schools best fulfil this function. This is the strength of the public school system. The boy goes probably to his father's old school, prepared to enter warmly into all the ways of thinking and acting current in the place, and having a general notion of what they are. Games are apt to loom unduly large, and for many, learning from books appears to be comparatively unimportant. To understand public life and affairs, to have fixed standards of honour, to be more or less familiar with the classics, are the expectations which all must fulfil. But many of the boys do not expect to need any branch of knowledge in earning a living, though this is less true now than it formerly was when the number of public schools and the attendance at them were much more restricted. This indirect incentive to intellectual work has, then, less force than in other schools, especially as it is not held in honour among the boys. The strength of the intellectual incentives felt are, therefore, more entirely a matter of individual temperament and ability responding to the stimulus of a master's personality. That is to say, they are more largely found in the attraction of the subjects themselves and the way they are taught, and in the feeling of growing power and appreciation, than in that of the use which can be made of them in after life.

The really forcible argument for studying the classics was that they were the best introduction to "the great science of the nature of civilized man"<sup>1</sup> as Thomas Arnold put it. That there is truth in this cannot be seriously denied, but it is true only for those who so

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on Use of the Classics.*

master the languages that they can read the literature with appreciation. That many of the best boys in the great schools, and some in those of a lower rank—often, finding incentive in the hope of winning a scholarship at one of the universities—have done this does not remove from the schools of many past centuries the reproof that the majority of the boys who were offered this mental pabulum found in it no stimulus of the mental appetite, worked only under compulsion, and never attained either the power of reading a Latin or Greek book or the desire so to occupy their leisure. Moreover, as the world's interests became more and more engaged in modern thought and speculation, modern events, and modern discoveries, so less and less did the records of ancient life and thought seem worth the trouble of mastering difficult unknown tongues which would be of use for no other purpose. The classics have thus inevitably become more and more unsuited to be the staple intellectual food offered to boys of the middle and upper classes. Their cultural office as stated by Arnold is more perfectly fulfilled by modern books, reflecting the real intellectual life of the present. So, for a variety of reasons they appeal to an ever-diminishing number both of boys and of home circles as especially worth learning. A knowledge of the literatures of Greece and Rome is less and less regarded as an essential part of "the education of a gentleman," and so the inciting force of such public opinion is decreasingly operative.

To acknowledge this is not to fail in appreciation of the classical literatures, especially that of Greece. It must ever remain true that Hellenic thought is the seed of modern intellectual life, and that any thorough

insight into the latter demands a knowledge of the former. Nor can it be questioned that an adequate knowledge of the languages is necessary to a full appreciation of the ancient thought. Some boys will always by temperament and capacity feel the attraction, and to them a course of classical study will be really educative. But the majority of boys and men have no great natural appreciation of linguistic niceties or beauties, and to them the general thought embodied in books is of more interest, and of greater inspiring power, than the subtler shades of meaning. So, as ideas are of greater moment than words, and the essence of a liberal culture is the thought it embodies and the outlook it helps to give, the ordinary boy would get a better insight into the life and thought of Greece and Rome by reading good translations of the classics than by spending much valuable time in beginning to learn languages which he can never master sufficiently well to do more than make a bald, halting, incorrect, and utterly inadequate, translation himself, with much resort to a dictionary interrupting the flow of thought.

After all, a language is essentially a medium for conveying thought, so that from the point of view of general culture all linguistic acquirement is simply instrumental. Unless, then, a language can be learnt to the stage at which it becomes a medium for thought, it is nothing but waste of time to study it at all. The plea that in learning Latin or Greek a boy obtains a valuable discipline in application to what is at once hard and intrinsically unattractive is based on a theory of empty mental training which is generally rejected as inconsistent with experience. There can be no incentive to interested effort when the pupil knows well that the

school never takes a scholar far enough to enable him to speak, understand, and read—in a word, to use—the language for himself. He asks, ‘What is the use of it?’ and no answer which satisfies him can be given. From the first he suspects its value, and he often finds that this suspicion is regarded as a certainty by those at home. Neither family tradition, nor family expectation, nor prospect of joy in the studies themselves, supports him.

These considerations apply to the study in school of Latin and Greek more than to that of modern foreign languages. It is easy for a boy to see that he may need French or German or Italian or Spanish for use or for delight, and even that it is probable that he will need them in holidays abroad if at no other time, and to desire that the school may begin to teach him what he can perfect by himself after school days are over. But, with the pupil who is not going through a university course in which Latin or Greek is included the school teaching will mark the term of his learning. He ‘learns for the school, not for life,’ and few indeed there are who consider this worth doing, especially when they know that at the best it can only be half done. While Latin was the common language of the thought of cultured Europe it was a different matter. Then all desire to gain knowledge from books was a strong incentive to learn Latin. But since the modern languages have become necessary to one who wishes to know the thought of other contemporary peoples, or to keep abreast of the advance in any branch of knowledge, this incentive to learn Latin has disappeared for most children, who see in it nothing beyond its—to them—not very attractive self. To persist in the classical tradition of schools would be to throw away a valuable

incentive which can easily be transferred to the learning of modern languages.

Thus it seems probable, as well as desirable, that it will be increasingly accepted as wise to make the classical languages the specialized work of pupils who are particularly attracted by linguistic studies, and with the majority to supply their place—especially in middle class schools—by modern languages. For, as the necessity of being able to read several modern European languages if one would keep in touch with the advance of knowledge and thought becomes more recognized by the leisured and cultured classes, and their commercial value more evident to the middle classes, the demand for the teaching of those languages in the schools to which their children are sent will become more imperative. Such a demand can only be adequately met by devoting the time given to the ancient languages to the modern, for it is evident that an attempt to teach four or five languages concurrently is bound to lead to very little mastery of any, and at the same time to make such serious inroads on the time available that more effort is given to acquiring the elementary use of the instruments of thought than to the study of thoughts themselves; in short, to make school learning preponderatingly verbal: and this is antagonistic to the very idea of culture.

The temptation to verbalism is always present in school, and it is naturally most potent in foreign languages. The power to speak the language and to understand it when spoken is essential to its being a real language to the learner. But unless the instruction take the pupil into the literature which enshrines the thoughts and aspirations of the foreign people but little educative



result can be produced on his soul. His mind is not widened by being placed at an unaccustomed point of view, nor his sympathies extended by an insight into the spiritual lives of nations with modes of thought and feeling different from those of his own countrymen. This takes time, and to succeed in several languages demands a nice adjustment of concentration of effort, always bearing in mind that the treasures of thought and knowledge in English books, and the wealth of interest in the world around, cannot be neglected without educational ineffectiveness.

Concurrently with the decreasing incentive of the classics came an increase in that offered by organized games. With growing facilities for communication they became more important, attracted more publicity, and conferred ever greater renown on the heroes who shone in them. So in the great boarding schools grew up a tradition that muscle is more than mind—a trend of evaluation quite in harmony with the increasingly materialistic mode of thought which marked the nineteenth century. However, that great schoolmaster Edward Thring found that boys whose intellectual life classics quite failed to stimulate drew incentive from various forms of practical work, and Arnold himself had held that classics were badly taught unless they were “made to bear on the things around us.”<sup>1</sup> So the situation was potentially saved. The growth in popularity of modern sides in public schools—at first scorned as refuges for the intellectually destitute—and of modern Honours schools in the universities, testify to the fact that people are more and more feeling that modern thought and modern life are of surpassing importance

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*

and interest, and that time cannot be given by most for an adequate mastery of languages which, even when mastered, are keys to literatures which, after all, serve only as a somewhat remote introduction to the study of the problems of our own day. Men's outlook is less backwards than it used to be, and their respect for the wisdom of the ancients is smaller; and, of course, children who grow up in this intellectual atmosphere are influenced by it, and generally find their intellectual desires excited most by what throws a direct light on present-day interests. The task before the public schools, as before every other type of English school, is to bring their work and their ideals into close touch with the real problems and interests of contemporary life. The trend of modern thought is evident, but what needs to be more clearly and generally recognized is the effect it has on the direction in which the young student of to-day will most generally find a call to which he easily responds, and that without such a result teaching will be less efficacious than it should be in arousing the desire, and giving the power, to learn.

The problem of what should be taught in school to girls is one which the present rapid changes of opinion as to woman's sphere in the world renders especially difficult of solution; particularly with respect to girls of the middle classes. There is an increasing tendency for girls to be prepared to enter various forms of professional and commercial life. This involves a strenuous intellectual application during the years of adolescence, which the generally considerable industry of girls renders particularly trying. Thus there is need for great care that the bodily health, and especially the nervous equilibrium, be not injured. There is, too, the danger that

the old and beautiful ideal of womanliness may suffer in the rough and tumble of competition with boys, with their coarser fibre and greater inertia in all that relates to mental work.

That the real profession of the majority of women will be in the future, as it has been in the past, to be competent mistresses of households and wise mothers of children may be taken for granted. But there is a minority not to be neglected who must expend their energies in other ways. Were it possible to separate the one class from the other in girlhood the task of preparing for each walk of life would be no more arduous than in the case of boys. As this is impossible the problem which a girls' school has to face is how far the needs of the one class should be subordinated to those of the other. The opinion seems to be somewhat widely held that at present higher schools for girls are too much oriented towards professional life. This is to sacrifice the majority, which from a national point of view is by far the more important, to the more individualistic needs of the minority. This would be a national misfortune. A broad preparation for the needs of the home is not only compatible with intellectual and æsthetic culture, but demands it. Towards this the work of the school should be addressed, and the more specialized and strenuous study needed for professional training should be left to be pursued in higher and specialized colleges by those who are then definitely looking forward to entering on some form of professional life. That in the lower schools much emphasis should be laid on preparation for efficient housewifery is a direct consequence of the position that all schooling should help to fit for actual life.

A condition without which no subject of study in any school can be a means of education is that it appeals with greater or less strength as an incentive, and that it may do so it must have some not too remote relation with the interests which are taken up into the child's being as he lives in his social circle. Individual temperament and the distinctive family outlook will together determine relative strength of interest aroused. But if a pupil is left utterly unresponsive nothing from that study really enters his life. He may remember verbal statements for a time, but his feelings and desires are left cold, his opinions and judgements are not affected.

This, however, does not render absurd the idea of a common course of study for whole classes of pupils. Young children have but embryonic tendencies and interests, and a sympathetic teacher can excite most of them to some temporary enthusiasm for almost any subject with which he is himself in sympathy. So the beginnings are made of many possible lines of strong incentive. The home attitude, the boy's temperament and the outlook it makes the most natural for him to take, and the continued stimulating or depressing power of the teaching, are the great determinants of the strength these growing dynamic forces of life will acquire, and of the relation they will hold to each other. But the outlook of a true education must be as wide as life, so that the course of study in every school should be sufficiently full not only to give choice of more specialized interests for the elder pupils but to vivify and strengthen general interests in all the main types of human life and activity.

The questions when specialization should begin and to what extent it should be carried admit of no general

answer. Everything depends upon the place in life the pupil is preparing to occupy. No matter what may be a person's work he needs a vast amount of knowledge and insight outside its range. But in some cases this is mainly knowledge which can be gained only by the experience of living among men ; in others, in addition to this is demanded much knowledge which can only be acquired by the study of books or by some other directed kind of mental work. The law of the barrister, for example, would be of little use to him unless it were supported by a considerable amount of knowledge of things outside law. Moreover, the standard of culture of the grade of society in which the pupils are likely to move should be a determining factor in deciding how much general study should be considered educationally necessary before, or by the side of, specialized study. The higher the social rank to which the doer of the specialized work is held to belong, and the less mechanical that work is in itself, the greater the number of relations needed between it and the whole intellectual equipment, and so the fuller that equipment must be. To grant, then, that some specialization may be good in the upper forms of middle class schools whose pupils leave at about sixteen years of age does not commit one to the position that a pupil who is preparing to continue his studies for another six or seven years, and to undertake a university course, should begin specializing at an equally early age. It must be assumed that such an extension of the preparation for life is related to a higher form of specialized work, and one, therefore, which is wholly effective only when it is related to a wide range of more or less directly cognate knowledge. Moreover, it is implied that the social position which

this higher work will give will entail wide duties, and give openings for numerous activities, for which many-sided intellectual, social, and æsthetic, interests are essential.

Thus, the higher the specialization the wider and deeper the general culture in which it should be embedded, so that the higher the institutions in which the learning is acquired the later the age at which the specialization should begin. Premature specialization is one of the greatest intellectual evils of our time, but what is premature in one case is legitimate in another. To draw a general rule from its legitimacy in the latter class of cases is to assume implicitly that all specialized work is on the same intellectual level, an assumption which has only to be laid bare to be rejected. Again it must be insisted that the solution of the scholastic problem is to be found only in a whole-hearted and intelligent attempt to relate it to the problems of the actual life of the young people concerned. An abstract scholastic theory which decides these matters simply from scholastic considerations deserves the contempt with which the general public is apt to regard it.

But though rejected when set forth explicitly as theory, the rule of premature specialization is accepted in practice when embodied in a system of examinations which has the specious appearance of discovering and cherishing special talent. The honours of the universities are open to specialists, and the preparation to win them begins in the schools eight or ten years earlier. Such premature over-emphasis on one branch of learning would be impossible did the universities require adequate evidence of general intellectual culture before their own specialized work was begun. Schools which prepare

their pupils for a university course would then not have the temptation, which is now overwhelmingly strong, to narrow the intellectual outlook of their ablest pupils in order to secure for them the honour and pecuniary reward of a scholarship, and for themselves the reputation of successful human training-stables. If the universities cannot succeed in securing sufficient depth and width of intellectual life as a condition of entrance they should insist on adequate time being given to it during the university course itself, before its own specialized studies are entered upon. The older university theory that the general course in the Faculty of Arts should be, in all cases, preliminary to the specialized higher faculties was essentially sound, though, of course, it would now find expression in studies different from those of the Middle Ages.

The insistence on an extent of general culture proportioned to the time spent in the scholastic preparation for life would not necessarily imply that throughout the general course equal emphasis should be placed upon every kind of intellectual interest, but only that none should be allowed to fall out altogether, or to recede into the remote background.

The dominance of examinations in English schools and universities has some virtues and many vices, when regarded as a means of education. To enable a school to judge whether it is doing its work of teaching as well as other schools of similar grade and in similar circumstances is helpful: on the other hand, implicitly to pit school against school, often when the circumstances are by no means similar, is wholly bad. An examination imposed or conducted by an outside authority, or accepted from an external examining board, may give

needed guidance to some schools as to what it is generally considered desirable to teach : on the other hand, it limits freedom, fails adequately to meet special needs, and imposes what the examiners think desirable in the way of learning. Such considerations apply to examinations common to many schools, no matter how they are conducted. It seems plain that their educative value to a school is in inverse proportion to the competence of its teaching staff.

Such objections do not lie against internal tests of progress based on the actual work done in the school. Then the examination follows the teaching, no matter whether it is conducted by the staff alone or in conjunction with an external examiner. English schools and universities, however, have unfortunately inherited a tradition as to how the results of their work should be tested, which in its general application seems to us vicious in essence as based on a false conception of knowledge, and disastrous in its reflex influence on the aims set before themselves in study by the students. So long as school and university studies were linguistic and, to a less degree, mathematical, doubtless a system of examination by papers to be written in a limited time was a test of power to use the language or to solve mathematical problems. But to apply this method to subjects of quite other types is to test the wrong things in the wrong way. A system of examination by papers, to be written in a limited time and under conditions under which no real intellectual work is ever done, can be no true test of either the mental power developed or of the trends of interest cultivated. The tendency of all such tests is to emphasize memory of words and encourage the temporary storage of statements of facts.



If problems are set they must be such simple ones as can be solved in the very short time available for each, and without access to sources and authorities to which every student would appeal at any other time ; and so, again, the power tested is little more than that most elementary and least valuable form of memory—the recall of isolated pieces of information.

The power which is tested is the power the student finds it pays him best to cultivate. So the aim of students at school and university is too often just to ‘learn’ enough to answer the questions, and for many the examination becomes, as Guyau put it “nothing but permission to forget.”<sup>1</sup> Were tests of trends of interest and of realized power devised, the laborious accumulation of facts would no longer be the object of ambition, and this it is which overweights school and university study. The boy or girl at school, the undergraduate at the university, all have interests outside their studies, no matter how numerous and varied the latter may be. They do not relieve over-pressure by dropping all such outside interests, though some may be held in temporary abeyance. For those interests are real, because they grow out of the intellectual life. Until the studies of schools and universities are equally real interests, those institutions will be but imperfect places of education. When they are, there will no more be over-pressure in the one case than in the other. But such a truly educative state of things will only be possible when the tests of progress are found in the normal course of work and are cognate to that work in its best and most profitable form.

No doubt, in the view of knowledge they commonly assume examinations do but reflect the current evil

<sup>1</sup> *Education and Heredity*, trans. by Greenstreet, p. 172.

superstition that to be able to talk is to know. It is just the dominance of this error which makes school work so often worthless, even when not positively mischievous, as a means of education. From it springs the prevalence of the bad teaching which calls forth no intellectual life, but stifles any nascent aspiration to know under a wearisome dogmatic reiteration of statements of little intrinsic worth. The contrast between the attitude of children in general towards their lessons and towards their other pursuits is a sufficient condemnation of the former. Till schools free themselves from the false notion that learning is naturally repugnant to youth they will never do much of that true teaching which consists in stimulating others to learn. And till school teaching is enlightened by careful meditation on the conditions of its success it cannot be really educative.

True teaching develops power ; true examining would be a testing of that power—the power to use knowledge, not to exhibit a simulacrum of it. True teaching is the suggestion of problems and enquiries, and the giving of any guidance necessary for their resolution ; true examining would test this power of independent quest. Nor would it impose conditions alien from those under which the actual intellectual work of life is done. An intelligent worker in real life uses such aids as libraries and museums, and takes an adequate time in which to solve his problems and find an answer to his questions. He does not try to fill his memory with minute details : it is sufficient for him to know where to lay his hand on them when he needs them. This power of knowing where to find the tools with which intellectual work is done, and how to use them, is of first-rate importance in true work : the current examination not only ignores

it but stigmatizes it by implication as an unworthy substitute for the labour of memorizing. In short, it inculcates wrong methods of work as well as wrong ideals of work.

An examination should be a test of the power to do such real intellectual work as is adapted to the age and intellectual development of the person examined, and should, therefore, propose suitable problems for solution under conditions normal for that person, and in what is for him an adequate time. With a variety and choice of problems, trend of interest would be discovered, and the result would show the kind of mental power possessed. In such solutions that reproduction of the thoughts and statements of others which now is most highly esteemed would sink into the very low place which its character deserves. The present system, even when most intelligently worked, tends to give greatest glory to superficial quickness, for no problem can be set which demands long-continued earnest thought, judicial weighing of evidence, testing of conclusions—in short, anything of high intellectual worth. Verbal memory and shallow cleverness are the surest aids to success. No wonder that the prodigies of the examination room often sink in after life into a profound obscurity of mediocrity.

Teaching, then, is educative as far as it is stimulating. And in this the personality of the teacher counts for more than the method of teaching. Especially is this the case with young pupils, for whose benefit detailed and stereotyped methods of teaching are so often put forth. Good teaching is methodical in the sense that it deals with definite topics in such a way that confusion of thought, waste of time, and disappointment of

expectation, are avoided. It secures that the learner knows what he is to try to learn because it ensures that he wants to learn it ; and it presents the material of his investigations in a well-ordered way, so that the unimportant does not obscure the essential, and the facts may be in evidence less for their own sakes than for the sake of the relations they embody. Good teaching is impossible without careful preliminary consideration on the part of the teacher of what shall be considered, how it shall be dealt with, and in what general order the parts shall be taken up. But what is done in detail is determined at the moment by the interaction between the minds of the scholars, and between those minds and that of the teacher. Nothing is more disastrous to teaching as an instrument of education than implicit faith in a form of method. That method is best which evokes most fruitful effort. That is the teaching which gives power to do, and, therefore, increases freedom. Such teaching avoids both the error of the theory that a child should be left to make his own intellectual discoveries unprompted and ostensibly unguided, and that of the tradition that he should believe and do exactly what he is told, and no more. The union of these is the practical expression in the sphere of intellectual activity of the synthesis between freedom and authority. The teacher's art is so to set problems and pose questions that the pupil wants to solve and answer them ; in a word, that he seeks, but must be prepared to accept what he finds. So only can he rise to a conception of natural law.

It is not only in the world of things but also in the realm of thought that he must be led to seek, and to accept what he finds. In later life he may come to

question the generally received laws of nature or of human life ; in youth he is only preparing himself to be a critic by learning what evidence means, and in what its cogency consists. It is absurd to suppose that in a few short years a child can learn what it has taken the human race thousands of years to attain ; it is an educational sin to lead him to imagine that he has done so. This fundamental error underlies Rousseau's suggestion of prepared experiences in which the artificial arrangement is carefully hidden. In all helping of children to make 'discoveries' no attempt should be made to conceal the fact that help is given, though it need not be ostentatiously paraded. Especially is such help apparent when the young learner is finding his way into the world of thought. There he soon gets lost and discouraged unless he has continual encouragement and assistance. "How can we expect the child by an entirely spontaneous evolution to find for himself the thoughts which have become a human and national inheritance?"<sup>1</sup> asks Fouillée, and evidently no answer is possible but that it is utterly irrational to expect anything of the kind.

Yet the teaching is not educative if the thoughts be passively received and stored up in the memory to be reproduced on demand. They must be taken into the active thinking life of the reader. As Newman wrote : "A man may hear a thousand lectures, and read a thousand volumes, and be at the end of the process very much where he was, as regards knowledge. Something more than merely *admitting* it in a negative way into the mind is necessary, if it is to remain there. It must not be passively received, but actually and actively entered

<sup>1</sup> *Education from a National Standpoint* : trans. by Greenstreet, p. 101.

into, embraced, mastered. The mind must go half-way to meet what comes to it from without.”<sup>1</sup>

To enter into the thoughts of another is, however, to impose constraint on the intellectual life, even as we have seen that all the thoughts and opinions with which we are surrounded from our youth up help to shape our views and estimates. Mr. Lecky approached perilously near to nonsense when he wrote: “If our private judgement is the sole rule by which we should form our opinions, it is obviously the duty of the educator to render that judgement as powerful, and at the same time to preserve it as unbiassed, as possible. To impose an elaborate system of prejudices on the yet undeveloped mind, and to entwine those prejudices with all the most hallowed associations of childhood, is most certainly contrary to the spirit of the doctrine of private judgement.”<sup>2</sup> He apparently assumed that the “undeveloped mind” is void of knowledge and of thoughts, and to this sufficiently startling assumption he added that of the possibility of excluding the influences of the intellectual atmosphere in which that mind lives and grows. How can a mind grow except by thinking, and whence can it get the material to think about, or example to imitate in learning to think, but from those around it? It is the old false hypothesis of essential independence between a mind and its environment. We grant at once that these assumptions are necessary to the position that “our private judgement is the sole rule by which we should form our opinions.” That they are impossible to realize is but further evidence of our main thesis of the inevitable and unceasing reaction between

<sup>1</sup> *Idea of a University*, p. 489.

<sup>2</sup> *The Rise and Influence of Rationalism*, ch. 2.

life and surroundings, and that in this reaction freedom is attained through a right acceptance of constraint.

To form the unformed spirit so that it sees and accepts what is good and true is the aim of education, and by that aim all suggested means must be judged. Do they form the mind, and if so, how? Do they so form it that it strenuously seeks its ends? Are those ends good and true? In what way will such and such a piece of educative effort make towards the desired result? Such are the questions which should be continually in the mind of the educator, and by which he should test all that is offered for his acceptance. Our analysis has led us to see that no means are effective which do not keep close to real life—for, indeed, in so far as they depart from it they are untrue. The liability to get divorced from life and to work in an artificial world is a constant danger in school, and especially is its work of teaching apt to stray from real needs and interests and to be affected by fanciful abstract theories. Thus, teaching needs to be checked continually by the test of whether it is so related to the actual lives of those who are taught, and so given, that it leads them to press forward freely to relate themselves more fully to all that is good and noble and true in their own human world. Teachers who consider the actual lives of those whom they teach as a determining condition of their work, and who keep the ennobling of those lives always in view, are the only ones who are really seeking an ideal: others are merely pursuing shadows. For, we again repeat, an ideal is realizable by those for whom it is an ideal.

## CHAPTER V

### WHO ARE THE AGENTS?

EVERY concrete individual life or experience is a constant interaction between inner spiritual forces and the environment in which they function. In such reaction the trends of life—of interest, desire, purpose, thought—are determined. There are, then, innumerable influences helping to mould the developing personality, and these are strongest in early years, when trends of life have not become stereotyped by habituation. Some of these external influences are deliberately brought to bear, and these are rightly called educative. Others, so far as human intention is concerned, are casual, and yet their cumulative force may make in one general direction and may be very great. So, it must be recognized that, however strenuous and systematic educative endeavours may be, there is a considerable limitation in their power, and, consequently, in the responsibility of education for what the individual man or woman becomes.

Moreover, intentional efforts to influence are of all degrees of definiteness, of intensity, and of duration. Some are transient and almost accidental, such as advice or warning given on the spur of the moment to a child to whom one is a comparative stranger, and these are of all degrees of seriousness in intention; others are continued through years with much consistency, such as



those brought to bear on moral conduct by a good home, or on intellectual life by a good school. Some may be congruent forces making for the same general end, but directed by different persons or societies; others may be more or less directly opposed, and so tend to neutralize each other.

It would be an unprofitable task to attempt to enumerate all the incentives intentionally set before any one child or youth by all the various people with whom he is brought into contact, and to estimate their power. They can only be considered more or less in the mass, and the individual influences gathered up into that of typical groups. So, a discussion of the relative functions of the chief educative agents must concern itself with the forms of cumulative influence exerted by the various communities in which a child lives. Some are obvious because they are organized, and it would much simplify the task could our attention be limited to those. But that would be to neglect the fact that some of the strongest formative influences felt by the young are those of the unorganized community of the society in which they live. Here the attitude to life, the rule of manners, the standard of duty and of conduct, reflected in the family, exercise a persistent moulding force. Nor is this wholly—though it is partly—the passive pressure of a homogeneous environment. Many members of that society bring intermittent, but quite intentional, influences to bear on the children, as well as others which are at least the outcome of the feeling that general adherence to the accepted code ought to be secured. On the intellectual side, too, a child learns much from the willingly given inspiration, through example and precept, of those with whom he daily associates. The direct educative influ-

ence of the local organized community is less direct. It is felt by individual children mainly through the schools, and to a much less extent through public services—such as libraries, museums, and parks—maintained by the municipality. That of the State is still more indirect and vague in its individual incidence. We must, then, seek the agents of a child's education in the social relations in which he is placed, and only by a consideration of them can we determine the extent and justification of their respective functions.

The family is primordial. Of it the child becomes a member by birth, and of necessity he is related to all who belong to it in a much closer and more direct way than to any other persons. From its very nature the family is the first educator of the child. For it is not a mere sum of independent units—it is a whole, held together by relations inherent in human nature itself. Every member is, through ties of blood, in definite intrinsic relations to every other member. The parents are the centre and explanation of the whole, the first embodiment of love, of protection, and of law. All the children are bound together through the parents, and all share the same instinctive feelings towards them—feelings which become strengthened and particularized by habit and constant intercourse. Such a naturally organized community has a life of its own, in which each member participates to his degree, and with which his personal life is in close relation. For each child derives his life from the family ancestry, and from the moment of birth is surrounded by family feeling and thought. Often there is a strong family tradition into which he enters as into a heritage, and which he absorbs unconsciously in early years, and accepts consciously in

later years, as his own. So his life is an expression of the family life.

Further, the life of the family is rational and moral, and this implies that the family has corporate aims and ideals, with which the individual aims and ideals of its members are in a congruent relation. So far as this is not the case, the unity of the family is shattered. The family must seek to realize its ideal or lose its corporate life; that is, cease to exist as a family. But this endeavour involves in its very essence the training of its younger members. For this task its very smallness specially fits it. In early years constant and intensive educative influences are more potent than occasional though extensive influences. Sympathy and love—the very seeds of morality—spring up instinctively towards those who are related by blood, and are fostered in the narrow circle of family life with its common aims, common hopes, common fears, and constant, familiar, and affectionate, intercourse. To every member of the little community the budding nature of the child is a matter of deep and tender interest. Surrounded by love from the first—love concentrated, as it were, and so brought within his power to reciprocate—the child naturally and spontaneously learns to identify himself with the interests of those whom he loves, and to desire their happiness as his own; indeed to find his own happiness possible only when theirs is likewise secured. The instinctive attraction due to ties of blood is the focus from which wider human sympathies will radiate. So, as Professor Mackenzie says, “The family is like a burning-glass which concentrates human sympathies on a point”<sup>1</sup> The child enters with ever-increasing con-

<sup>1</sup>*Introduction to Social Philosophy*, p. 363.

scious intelligence and willingness into its corporate life, and slowly but surely finds his place in it. At first it is a mere appanage of himself, existing to do his will and satisfy his wants. Its loving discipline leads him on to recognize that there is a converse truth—that he exists to satisfy its desires and to do its will. So the conception of the constant correlation of rights and obligations grows up within him; and that, too, is ready to expand the width of its reference as circumstances call for such enlargement.

The concentrated and familiar intercourse of family life is also the best medium for the development of early intelligence. No one can obtain such an intimate insight into a child's nature as a mother, made observant by maternal love. She learns to know his strong and weak points, his temper and disposition, his mental peculiarities of every kind, as well as his physical perfections and shortcomings. And the amount of study and thought which the smallness of the family makes it possible to lavish on each individual child is a very important factor in the development of its mental powers. When other family duties limit seriously the amount of the maternal care and attention there is a great and lamentable loss of early education, though in present conditions it is often unavoidable, as in many working-class homes. When the limitation is due to the attractions of a frivolous life it is equally unfortunate, but is then blameworthy in exact proportion as it is avoidable.

In a good family, then, the individuality of the child finds scope. He lives the family life, yet his own life is not absorbed in it. It is not a cast-iron mould which shapes the lives of its members, but a free activity, receiving individual and separate expression in the life

of each. It is the mark of good family education that the individuality of the children is at once respected and lovingly directed. Each child is regarded as an end in himself—a being to be improved—and not simply as a means to increase the satisfaction of others. It may be noted that, from this educative point of view, the family is limited to those who live under one roof. Other relatives take more or less prominent places in the wider social circle, but do not contribute to the family influence.

Of all other societies the child in his early years is a member only indirectly through the family. As he grows older such membership becomes more direct and personal. But at first the child is a citizen of the State, and a member of the Church, because he is a part of a family which is a collective unit of membership. The educative functions of all such wider communities, therefore, increase with his age. At first they are absorbed in the family influence; then they become gradually separated from it. Here comes in the danger that with this inevitable separation may grow up antagonism, so that the youth is impelled in opposite directions by the educative influences brought to bear upon him by agents with a legitimate right to guide and direct him.

In its early stages the educative influence of any wider community is proportionate to its degree of accord with the family point of view. Thus, the child finds himself most at home in the social grade whose attitude towards things in general the family accepts and expresses. If the father is a keen politician the awakening of interests in the organized life of the local community and of the State is earlier and more effective than when the home circle cares little for such matters. If the parents are devout members of any religious body the child soon

feels the educative influence of that organized society. In all such cases the influence is felt through the family, and is powerful in proportion as it is in harmony with that of the general family tone. In a word, the family gives the first set to the child's interests, the first channels for his sympathies, the first trend of his opinions, the first indication of what he should desire and seek. And this shaping influence, working silently but constantly in the whole tone of the family life, and asserting itself with emphasis whenever there seems a danger that it may be disregarded, is at work all the time the child remains at home. Of necessity, it is the greatest of the agents that form him. It tinges the whole of his spiritual life with an indelible dye, and from the general tone of feeling it induces there is no possibility of complete escape. Doubtless, as the child advances in age he lives less and less exclusively in this centre of his social life. He finds himself accepted as a member of wider and wider circles, he is influenced by them in all kinds of ways, and in all degrees of intensity. But still at the heart of it all is the family life.

The primary educative work of the family is this general moulding of the whole spiritual life—its outlook, its moral standards, its sentiments, its modes of thought, its unexamined opinions or prejudices. It acts continuously through the ideas, aims, and estimates, which are taken for granted in all the family intercourse; and intermittently in direct instruction, either given positively through exhortation, advice, direction, or explanation, or negatively through prohibition, condemnation, and punishment. It is the atmosphere in which the child lives and acts. Nor is this training only a moral one: it is intellectual and practical as well. The mental

attitude towards all the chief relations of life, as well as towards those which are technically called moral, is being decided. And, of course, in family life and service every child learns to do many things and to use many things. Indispensable as is this more or less sporadic and informal instruction, it is yet inadequate to meet the requirements of life ; hence, from the family itself arises the need for the school, whose more systematic intellectual training may supplement that of the home.

The efficiency of family education is shown by such considerations to be a matter of the first importance to the well-being of the nation. On it, more than on anything else, depends both the character and the physical health and strength of future generations. If it is bad, or even ineffective, no excellence of schools can compensate for it. The school has then a warped and distorted nature to work upon, and may be unable to do more than check some of the evil tendencies and modify the jaundiced outlook.

Now, a family educates well or ill according to its outlook on life, and this is a matter both of ideal and of culture. As has been already urged, the latter is less essentially a matter of intellectual acquirement than of the qualities of soul that intellectual work has developed. Tolerance and charity, sympathy and beneficence, responsiveness to what is noble and beautiful, are the chief marks of culture, whether they be found in what are commonly called 'the cultivated classes' or in the ranks of 'the common people.' Thus looked at, culture and ideal are not separable. If the ideal is a narrow one—as that the one end of endeavour worth consideration is the amassing of wealth or a rising in the conventional social scale—its pursuit is incompatible with growth in real

culture. A low, selfish, and sordid or trivial, aim means the degradation of the spiritual life. There is no correlation between nobility of aim and width of outlook on the one side, and wealth or conventional social status on the other. In every class of the community are families whose life is formed round a noble conception, and others whose spiritual attitude is sordid and mean.

If goodness of human education depends on the conscious apprehension of a worthy ideal it follows that wherever such an ideal is absent good education is lacking. There are, probably, some families—as, for instance, those of habitual criminals—in which the ideal is utterly bad, and the children are trained in wickedness ; there are many in which the aim is low, narrow, and material ; but there are yet others which fail as educational environments because they have no conscious ideal at all—no seriousness in facing life. The parents drift through the years with superficial thoughts and feelings, devoid of fixed principles and rules, the playthings of changing circumstances. They seek nothing definite, but avoid as far as they can all trouble and annoyance. They have but a feeble sense of responsibility, for they never think earnestly on the outcome of their actions. They are the most ineffective of educators ; for in their dealings with their children they follow the same rule of expediency—to take the line of least resistance—as in other matters. It is evident that anything which weakens the recognition by parents of their responsibility for their children's training tends to cultivate in them this attitude of mind, and that everything which takes the direction of it out of their hands limits their responsibility, for no one can be responsible for that which is beyond his control.



As has been said, as the child grows older other communities wider than the family have their claims upon him as he advances towards the relative independence of manhood. Moreover, the family is only the starting-point of social organization. Its life is just as truly a reaction with the wider lives of the communities of which it is a part as is that of the individual with his personal environment. With some of these communities its relations are inevitable ; with others they are optional. Thus, the relation of the family, both with the State as a whole and with the local governmental organization, is inherent. It is true that a family may emigrate from one country to another, but nowhere in the civilized world can it escape from membership of some State, with correlative rights and obligations. The sense of this membership is less intimate in the large States of to-day than it was in the small city States which Plato and Aristotle regarded as alone capable of fulfilling all the requirements of a political organism. But it is not absent, and it attaches itself with pride to the past glories and present power of the native land. To some extent a more personal relation is felt with the local unit of organization—city, borough, or county—though this is more marked in small towns and rural districts than in populous industrial areas with a frequently shifting population. Still, the interests of the local community come home to the individual in many ways ; he knows something of the men elected to carry on the local government, and the matters they discuss affect his daily life. Here, too, the relation is a necessary one ; for though a family may pass from one district to another it only transfers its allegiance to another similar local authority.

The child is thus born into a State as necessarily as he is born into a family. But his recognition of that fact is neither immediate nor spontaneous. It has to be implanted and nourished. His membership of the class to which his parents belong, and in which they pass their lives, is much more quickly and unconsciously accepted as a fact. It is through a suitable education that he must be led to know that he has rights and obligations extending far beyond the narrow circle of his acquaintances. That truth will become real to him in proportion as his imagination is fired by the greatness and glory of his native land in the past and in the present. The rights and obligations are inherent in the position of a citizen whether he recognize them or not, just as gravitation is inherent in matter though every fall is a failure to give knowledge of that truth due control over action. Inherent social laws can no more be disregarded with impunity than can inherent physical laws. It is, therefore, to the advantage both of the State and of the individual child that the latter should be trained to live as an efficient and worthy citizen. For this his life in the home into which he was born is preparatory, as it leads him to the first conception of reciprocal rights and duties ; his life in his social circle extends this conception. But if both home and social circle be opposed to many of the corporate acts of the State the child will insensibly receive a bent antagonistic to loyal citizenship.

From the mere fact of birth, then, a child enters into a system of mutual rights and obligations with the State into which he is born. He has in particular the right to protection by the wider community against any social injury that might be inflicted upon him, and the corresponding obligation of submission to the regulations

which that wider community may make for his social guidance. Normally, the rights are received, and the obligations fulfilled, mainly through the family ; but if the family itself be in default it may become the duty of the State to intervene between it and the child. Then begins that disastrous conflict between legitimate educative agents of which we have spoken—a conflict which the good of the child demands should be terminated, even if it be by the abrogation of the family influence altogether, as when he is sent from home to a reformatory school.

The State could have no such rights were it merely an aggregate of independent units held together by an implicit 'social contract.' From this conception flows that extreme individualism which limits the rights and duties of Government to matters of external defence and internal police, and assumes that enlightened self-interest will so determine the conduct of every citizen that the greatest possible well-being of the whole community will be secured. There is something noble in this thought of a universal rational pursuit of the good by every individual ; but it is an ideal in the sense of a figment of the imagination, not in the only serviceable sense of a possible improvement to be attained. It ignores the complex nature of man—his tendency to act on impulses and instincts whose reference is narrowly selfish and immediate, and whose leading is far from being uniformly in the direction in which enlightened self-interest would point. It ignores, too, the thorough-going dependence of the individual on the community, which involves that unless he seek the common ends as well as his private ends he must fail to fulfil the obligations which his citizenship imposes on him. Experience shows that,

however closely common and private ends would coincide were both directed by perfect wisdom, in actual life they often diverge, and may quite possibly conflict.

In opposition to extreme individualism stands the theory which would absorb the man in the State, identify private with public duty, and estimate personal worth solely by the test of social efficiency. This is to regard the individual as merely a means to the attainment of the common end of the State—whether it be military as in ancient Sparta, or commercial and industrial as would be the tendency in our own times.

Neither man nor State, however, can be successfully taken as a mere means towards the perfection of the other, just because the existence of each is so implicated in that of the other that the degradation of either—no matter how motived—involves as an inevitable and rapid consequence the degradation of the other. Man is by nature both individual and social; for, as rational, he cannot but seek to understand the world of which he is a part, and his relations to the realities around him. He must find—or imagine—a system in things which satisfies his reason. But the material world is always more or less foreign to the natural man, because the rationality he seeks in it lies hidden beneath the surface. In intercourse with his fellows he feels himself in contact with rational minds like his own, and he can understand them because he finds them swayed by like passions, desires, and thoughts, as himself. So, in early stages he transfers this comprehensible life as directly as he can to the world of things, and imagines it everywhere peopled by intelligent spirits, of greater power than his own but prompted to action by like motives and impulses. His later explanations are only deeper ways of finding more con-

sistent rationality in it. In the world of men, therefore, man finds his own nature: he is at home in it because he is part of it, and he cannot in thought cut off his life from its influences any more than from all relations to the world of things.

But rational life is life in which means are intelligently taken to attain an object, either clearly apprehended in thought or vaguely felt as desirable, perhaps largely through the promptings of instinct. However that may be, the planning of means is an intellectual process which involves adaptation of forces. With reference to a common end the forces are the efforts of the various members of the society. Hence, the conception of obligation to work for the attainment of the purpose of the community, so far as it is understood, is inherent in the elementary fact that man is a rational being. Doubtless, the passions and selfish impulses of an individual may lead him to do violence to this, as to any other, demand of his reason. But then all sense of completeness of life must be wanting.

The social community into which a man is born is, then, not an accidental setting for his life. His social relations are necessary and intrinsic, because only through them can he realize many of the potentialities of his being. In its widest reading this asserts the essential brotherhood of all men. Through the narrower community of each nation the citizens are related to the rest of humanity in a way analogous to that in which through the family the child is related to the State. But for our purposes we need not go so far afield. Despite the ever-increasing bonds of communication and intercourse, the growing community in knowledge, in ideals, and in aspirations, between corresponding classes in all civilized

nations, the separate political organization into States gives the units of administrative action. In every long-organized State, bound together by community of race, of aspirations, or of interests, there is a national life, expressing a national ideal in some ways peculiar to itself. The acceptance of this by the individual citizens is patriotism, and to the extent to which patriotism inspires a people the claims of the nation as a living whole are acknowledged: to the degree to which private interests and pleasures are sacrificed to its demands the national good becomes a motive force in individual life. It is evident that when patriotism loses its force a process of national disintegration begins; and unless its place be supplied by the emergence into prominence of other social bonds and obligations the national life is weakened and tends to disappear: the individualism which has its deepest root in man's physical nature begins to overcome the social feelings which are the necessary conditions of his higher spiritual life.

In the constant interaction between the individual and the State each shapes the other. But the larger the State the more indirect is its corporate influence on the citizen, and the more indirect is his influence on it. In a society as complex as that of any modern European nation there are, it is true, all kinds of interactions of class with class, but the relations of understanding and sympathy of each individual are largely confined to members of his own social grade, and often of his own economic pursuit. His relations with members of other classes are frequently limited to those of an economic nature, and are too often accompanied by those feelings of opposition and incipient distrust which so easily enter into bargaining between people who conceive their interests to be

antagonistic. Thus, the tendency of modern industrial and commercial life towards increasing the magnitude of enterprises, and so drawing together vast numbers of working men whose sole interest in the industry is to gain by it as good a livelihood as possible, is to separate both the actual lives of the working classes and the ideals which dominate them from those of their employers, who frequently, as members of limited liability companies, care only for profits. This is antagonistic to the continuance of solidarity of corporate national feeling, and renders it difficult to secure the hearty co-operation of every class in measures taken by the State for the common good.

It is true that all classes have hitherto united in the presence of a great national crisis, and there is no present reason to fear for the future in that respect. But the growth of the feeling of exclusive class solidarity may easily involve a weakening of the feeling of national unity, especially if the conviction spread that the wishes and views of the great mass of the people—the working classes—are practically ignored. Nothing comes out more plainly in the working man's expression of his thoughts and feelings in *Seems So!* than the suspicion that "he is treated like a child badly brought up by its parents, a child very wronged and very naughty,"<sup>1</sup> and that by people whose intentions may be good, but whose knowledge of the conditions they wish to improve is defective. The action of the State in what relates to the life of any of the various classes of its citizens can be taken up into that life only if it be in accord with the modes of thought and the conditions of existence of that class. And unless it be taken up, so that the various

<sup>1</sup> Ch. 20.

classes feel that their own interests are understood as well as sought by the State in its corporate capacity, the recognition of national obligation must decrease with the growing conviction that class rights, either through indifference or through ignorance, receive inadequate recognition. In no matter is this more important than in regulation by the State of the education of the children, for unless such action be consonant, not only in intention but in deed, with the aspirations of the parents, it cannot fail to weaken at once the sense of corporate unity and that of parental responsibility.

Most diverse views have been held as to the legitimate range of State action in education. That the training of the young is a matter of common interest has been generally recognized among civilized peoples. For centuries this interest was expressed through the Church, in which the whole nation on its spiritual side was organized. As this unity became less and less the fact the claim of the Church to be the great educational corporation was more and more questioned. Then for one corporate agent another was sought, and was naturally found in the State. So La Chalotais claimed for the State "the inalienable and imprescriptible right to instruct its members," and nowhere has that right been asserted both in theory and in practice more thoroughly than in France since the Revolution. "The University, as it existed during the First Empire, offers a striking example of that mania for the control of the general will which philosophers had so attractively taught and Napoleon so profitably practised. It is the first definite outcome of a desire to subject education and learning to wholesale regimental methods, and to break up the old-world bowers of culture by State-worked steam-ploughs....



The new University of France . . . was not a local university: it was the sum total of all the public teaching bodies of the French Empire arranged and drilled in one vast instructional array. Elementary schools, secondary schools, *lycées*, as well as the more advanced colleges, all were absorbed in and controlled by this great teaching corporation, which was to inculcate the precepts of the Catholic religion, fidelity to the Emperor and his Government, as guarantees for the welfare of the people and the unity of France.”<sup>1</sup> With some modification of detail the same general conception of the relation of the State to the training of the young prevails in France to-day.

Now, it was not evident that the functions which had been universally attributed to the Church, so long as it was recognized as the divinely appointed teacher of mankind, reverted to the State when the claim of the Church was rejected. In our own country the adherents of the individualistic school of thought were strenuous in their opposition to any interference whatever of the State with schools provided for the mass of the people. One of the ablest expositions of the extreme view is contained in a series of *Letters written to Lord John Russell* by Mr. E. Baines in 1846. He bases his arguments on the two main grounds of freedom of thought and parental responsibility. He urges that the principle upon which State Education is founded is “that it is the duty of the Government to train the Mind of the People,” and that if this be accepted limitations of its scope are “purely arbitrary, and adopted from motives of policy and expediency,” and, further, that history and experience show this to be the case. So, while he grants that “mental cultivation and good moral and religious principles in the people

<sup>1</sup> Rose: *Life of Napoleon I.*, ch. 12.

are necessary to the public welfare," he denies the corollary drawn by the advocates of State action "that Government, being bound to care for the public welfare, is consequently bound to give the cultivation and the principles which are essential to it."<sup>1</sup> He foresees that "this principle would obviously require a universal and compulsory education, not only in general knowledge, but also in religious and political opinions,"<sup>2</sup> and in an earlier letter he had already urged that "to compel the education of the children in any particular set of schools is an alarming interference with liberty."<sup>3</sup> In an eloquent passage he writes: "Relieve men of their *duties*, and you rob them of their *virtues*. It is the duty of parents to provide education for their children, as they provide them with food and clothing. It is the duty of the rich to help the poor. It is the duty of every patriot and every Christian, and especially of Christian communities, to diffuse the light of religion and knowledge among the ignorant and the depraved. These are the clear dictates of Christianity and of reason. Leave Christianity and reason to do their own work; and they will do it in the right way, that is, by working on the understandings and hearts of men, not by coercion and compulsion, which produce only an outward and mechanical obedience."<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Baines, then, opposed all direct action of the State in the matter of schooling; but he was willing that it should aid the efforts of the religious bodies to provide the needed schools. "The course hitherto pursued by the Committee of Council on Education is, I conceive,

<sup>1</sup> Letter 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *The Social, Educational, and Religious State of the Manufacturing Districts*, p. 73.

<sup>4</sup> *Letters to Lord J. Russell*, 1846. Letter 5.

right so far as it goes, though it ought to go further, and to help the denominational schools of Dissenters as well as the exclusive schools of the Church.”<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered that the grants of the Committee were then divided between the definitely Anglican National Society and the undenominational British and Foreign School Society.

At the same time the legal claim of the Church of England to exclusive recognition by the State was being urged. Bishop Phillpotts of Exeter claimed that a recent judgement of the Master of the Rolls showed that “if a sum be given in trust for purposes of religion generally, the law requires that it be employed for the purposes of the Religion of the Church of England,” and that the terms of the Grant for Public Education must be construed to be for purposes of public education on the principle thus enunciated ; that is to say—quoting from the Judgement—“Religious Education forming part of the plan, and that Religious Education being according to the laws of the land.”<sup>2</sup> So, in a letter to Lord John Russell, the Bishop drew the conclusion that while “the Church has no right to claim the enforcement of any system of Education on the people, or any part of the people, least of all on that part which does not belong to the Church,” nevertheless it “has a right to demand of the State the means of *offering* Education to all, whether they are members of the Church or not.” On Lord John Russell replying that the Government, while willing to aid the Church to provide schools for its own children, did not think it right to withhold aid from dissenters for a like purpose, the Bishop affirmed that this statement

<sup>1</sup> *The Social, etc., State of the Manufacturing Districts*, p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> *Charge*, 1839.

“gives me peculiar gratification, as it shows that no practical difficulties need any longer to exist in combining due regard for the duties of the State to the Church, with full security to the rights of conscience in those who dissent from her doctrines, and do not join in her worship.” Practically, he would allow that no form or kind of religious instruction or observance should be forced on any child whose parents conscientiously objected to the teaching of the National Church “in any school maintained wholly or partially by aid from the State.”<sup>1</sup> Such a concession of abstract legal rights to concrete facts obviously did not meet the claim for absolute equality put forward by writers like Mr. Baines. Indeed, the Bishop had spoken of such a position as “a perfectly new principle that the Church is one among the religious denominations of the country, whose head is the Sovereign, and whose institutions are interwoven with those of the temporal power.”<sup>2</sup>

Though the State persistently extended its control over elementary schools it took no direct steps towards providing them till 1870, and that was soon followed by the enactment of compulsory attendance, and by stringent negative regulation of the religious instruction which could be given in schools provided by public money, and its restriction to one definite period at the beginning or end of the school day in all schools receiving public aid. Thus the consequences which Mr. Baines foresaw were, except in the matter of politics, soon fulfilled.

Such a brief retrospect shows that in England the action of the State, at any rate in its inception, was due to compromise dictated by expediency, and not to the

<sup>1</sup> *Charge*, 1839.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

acceptance of the general principle that to train the citizens is the duty of the Government. That doctrine, however, seems to be winning increased support, and the Act of 1902 undoubtedly recognized a wider obligation on the State than had hitherto been accepted. By it, Local Authorities were given definite powers to provide and support, with aid from the State, secondary as well as elementary schools. Further, of recent years grants of public money have been given to universities on condition of the acceptance of a certain amount of State supervision.

An examination of the functions of the State in the education of its children must start from the fact that the recognition of the essential importance to the State of the family, and through the family, the child, implies the acceptance of obligations on the side of each. Moreover, the State has a direct interest in the character, intelligence, and efficiency, of its citizens as a body. It is, therefore, incumbent on it to secure that satisfactory training is received by all its younger members. In other words, a national system of education is demanded by the very concept of the nation as an organized body with purposes to be achieved and a life to be lived as a community. A national system of education, however, is not the same thing as a State system of schools, and only through confusion of thought can they be identified. As education is a spiritual process, a national system of education is in its essence a spiritual system. In other words, it is a system of means by which all the spiritual needs of the young in all classes of the community are adequately met. Now, it is evident that the most complete and elaborate system of schools and universities provided and controlled by the State may, in this

sense, not be a national system of education at all, for it may fail to respond to the nation's need for culture and guidance. As Mr. Rose remarks on the elaborate State system of Napoleon: "To all those who look on the unfolding of the mental and moral faculties as the chief aim of true *education*, the homely experiments of Pestalozzi offer a far more suggestive and important field for observation than the barrack-like methods of the French Emperor."<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, it is conceivable that private provision and management might meet those needs—as in the case of ancient Athens—though in a large modern State it would probably be impossible to secure this without some help from the State in organization, and unlikely that sufficient funds would be available. In England till recently secondary schools were thus left to private sources of supply, and the universities are still mainly outside the sphere of State control.

It seems, then, desirable to enquire what are the true functions of the State in the matter of schools, whether provided privately or from public funds. It is often assumed that if the State pays it has the right to impose what conditions it will. This is to bring into the spiritual work of education those economic conceptions of the relation of employer to employed which are being more and more generally rejected as fundamentally unsound. It is recognized that there the relation is not that of an employing intelligence to an inert mass of matter, to be shaped, like clay in hands of a potter, according to his will, but that of free agents contributing to a common work. So with the State and education. The State has no true right to dictate how a child shall be educated, or what he shall be taught, regardless of his

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* ch. 12.

needs or of the aspirations of his family. It has no right to disregard the rights of the family, and among those rights one of the most primitive is to be allowed to fulfil its obligations towards its children. Normally, the State ought not to interfere with the home training of the children. But when parental duties are obviously neglected, then both the right of the community to be preserved from the contamination of evil and incompetent members, and the right of the individual child to opportunity for physical and mental training, justifies coercive action by the corporate authority. In a word, the rights of the State are not absolute, but correlative with those of the parents and of the child. Further, those rights carry the obligation to fulfil its functions as effectively as possible, and in a way as beneficial as possible to the citizens whose lives it is, in this matter, directing. We have, however, insisted throughout that the formative work of schools cannot be done well unless both child and family throw themselves into it. It follows from this that compulsion is always an evil unless its working gradually leads to acceptance of the law in the minds of those on whom it is imposed. Could it be felt as constraining only by negligent and vicious parents, its operation would be as good as external authority in the spiritual life can ever be. Unfortunately, it is felt by all the working classes, and is felt by them as a distinctive badge of inferiority. That it has not succeeded in winning adherence to the principle that attendance at school is in itself good is made evident by the fact that the end of the legal obligation is commonly the end of the recognition of all obligation.

The educational value of a system of scholastic institutions is not to be gauged by the completeness of

the machinery—that may spell death, and not life. Nor is it to be estimated by excellence of buildings or cost to the nation. Its sole test is its adaptation to the work it ought to do, and the function of corporate action is to aid in securing that adaptation. As the greatest need of all is independence of thought and power of initiative, it follows that the less external regulation of the inner life of schools of all kinds is found needful the more perfect is the system as an agent of education.

Our analysis has led us to reject both the extreme positions—that the State ought to provide all scholastic institutions and control their mode of working, and that it has no concern with them. The true view seems to be a synthesis in which the principles underlying both these views are held together as complementary to each other. The State should secure that the provision for instruction is suitable and available, but it should not dictate what the schools should do, regardless of the aspirations and wishes of the parents of the pupils and of the social classes which send their children to the various types of schools. So the functions of the State may be thus summarized—to secure an adequate supply of suitable schools and other places of instruction: to secure that the work of various types of schools is adapted to the various needs of the community: to secure an adequate supply of suitable teachers: to guarantee the efficiency of schools and teachers. The extent to which the State should take direct or indirect action in any one of these particulars is a matter not of principle but of expediency. We may be said to have a national system of medical service without the necessity having arisen for the direct intervention of the State. Were the scholastic needs of the nation equally well met



without corporate action, the State might look on in benevolent neutrality, and yet the country would have a national system of scholastic education in every important sense of the term.

The mediaeval theory that by birth every child in Christendom became a subject of the Church—the visible kingdom of God on earth—and that his obligation to obedience to its commands was as much higher than his duty to the secular State as the spiritual is above the temporal, has, ever since the religious Reformation in the sixteenth century, become continuously less applicable to the facts, especially in countries which have thrown off corporate allegiance to the Roman Church. Now-a-days, even in nations in which the religious life of the people is not organized into many independent religious communities, and in which the majority profess adherence to the same church, there is always a minority who repudiate that allegiance. Nor can any church enforce its claims by any but spiritual measures and sanctions. Doubtless, where there is a national or ‘established’ church it has a theoretical claim to represent the corporate action of the State on its religious side, but that claim is practically ignored, and it may even happen that the Government which represents the State is, individually and collectively, antagonistic to that church. Churches possess only spiritual authority, and in practice they can exercise that over those only who voluntarily accept it. Active membership of any organized religious body implies such acceptance, so that the claim of a church to teach with authority in matters of faith must be recognized by its own members, or it ceases to be a church at all. It may still hold together and undertake various forms of beneficent action, but it

has changed its character from that of an authorized exponent of divine truth to that of an association for mutual spiritual edification and for the promotion of human ends.

While the Church was generally recognized as the organization of the nation for all spiritual purposes, the care of the instruction both of young and old was naturally regarded as its province. Now that it has lost this position in men's minds its practical function in education is the training of the young in active membership of its own community. The religious life has of necessity two sides—that of personal relation to God, and that of fellowship in "the household of faith." Though practically all Christians recognize both aspects, yet the various religious bodies do so with very different degrees of emphasis. This may, indeed, be said to be the fundamental difference between the Catholic and the Protestant conception of religion, and it accounts for the fact that while many Protestants are at present willing to accept a teaching of religion from which all reference to an organized Church is carefully eliminated, those who lay greater weight on the corporate conception reject it. To the one the essence of religion is independent of distinctive doctrine and of church membership; it is the private drawing near of the soul to God. The seeking of church membership is a consequence of personal religion, and aids it through the support derived from the sympathy of others. To the other this very drawing near is normally through divinely appointed channels of which the visible and organized Church is the guardian, so that conscious membership of the Church is of the essence of the Christian life. But no one can intelligently live as a member of a community

to whose nature, laws, and modes of thinking and acting, he is a stranger. The doctrines believed are the framework of the religious life ; for faith is the great support of love, and so counts for much in the determination of conduct. Thus, religious teaching must be distinctively doctrinal, in the sense that such a comprehension of the faith of the Church as children are capable of attaining should be striven for, and that the duty of believing that divine truth is deeper than childish understanding, and is to be accepted as revealed in the teaching of the Church, should be inculcated.

The educative function of organized religious bodies is, then, now-a-days conceived in two ways. In one, membership of the community is unessential, and is to be left to later personal choice. In the other, that membership is essential, and is, therefore, regarded as both a duty and a privilege carrying with it obligations both of belief and thought and of corporate act. The enforcement of conclusions drawn from either principle on those who hold the other cannot be justified, whether it be attempted by Church or by State. That is religious intolerance. To subject the children of those who hold the traditional Catholic view to 'undenominational' teaching is as great a violation of conscience as to subject the children of those who dissent from a church to its dogmatic teaching. To those who hold the corporate conception 'undenominational' teaching is essentially dogmatic, in that its fundamental assumption is the dogma that membership in a Church which teaches definite doctrines is not an essential factor in religion. There can be dogma of negation just as truly as dogma of assertion. The inability of many advocates of undenominationalism to understand the corporate posi-

tion is a striking example of how habitual prepossessions of thought render men blind to what to others seems an axiomatic principle.

On the practical difficulties of undenominational teaching it is not necessary to say much. Basedow claimed that the Philanthropinum at Dessau was genuinely undenominational, and that Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, Jews, and Mohammedans could receive its religious teaching without offence. Even then it would seem that atheists—who were a good deal in evidence in the eighteenth century—were not considered, and that Basedow had no conception of the Catholic view of corporate church life. While people are of all religions and of none, and while in every large town there is a considerable cosmopolitan population, it would seem plain that no form of common religious teaching, which would be inoffensive to everybody, is possible in schools which the children of all attend. 'Undenominational' religious teaching based on the Bible is in practice either not religious or not undenominational. Frequently it adopts the former alternative, and deals with the history, geography, and literature, contained in the Bible, drawing from it lessons of morality, but saying little or nothing of matters which pass beyond the bounds of morality or of poetry into the domain of religion. It can only be really religious when it is given by an earnestly religious teacher, who, of course, is a member of some church holding its own doctrines. No matter how conscientiously the definite inculcation of such doctrines is avoided, they have formed the teacher's thought, coloured his conceptions, and determined his attitude, so that they give an unconscious bias to his teaching. Moreover, as has been said,

the assumption that dogma is negligible is itself dogmatic.

The theoretical claim of the National Church to be the authorized teacher of the whole nation has in practice to be reduced to that of being authorized to teach her own children and to offer her instruction to all others who may be willing to accept it, and this claim she shares with all other religious bodies. It is notorious that many parents who are not active members of any religious congregation are quite willing, and sometimes anxious, that their children should have a religious training. Now, the position which we are throughout maintaining implies that the State has no right to run counter to parental aspirations and wishes in matters of religious belief. The wealthy classes can still choose for their children schools in which their own religion is both taught and practised. The middle and working classes have the same inherent right.

It is not a matter of religious instruction confined to fixed periods in the school life. A religious school is religious throughout. As Eucken says: "Religion does not mean a special domain by the side of others; its intention is rather to be the innermost soul and the supreme power of the whole life."<sup>1</sup> A clear insight into the practical difficulties, and consequent unlikelihood, of securing this in schools maintained and controlled by the State was one of the grounds on which such leaders of Nonconformist thought as Mr. Baines opposed State interference. In one of his letters to *Lord John Russell* he wrote: "Religion . . . is not an isolated department of knowledge, to be kept in a corner of the mind . . . it should be an all-pervading principle. . .

<sup>1</sup> *Life's Basis and Life's Ideal*, trans. by Widgery, p. 7.

Religion includes not only the knowledge of God, but of ourselves. It gives us not only the standard of duty, and the rules of action, applying to all the relations of men with each other, in communities and families, in business and politics, but it goes into the inner man and supplies the purest motives, the strongest principles, and the highest aspirations.”<sup>1</sup> A school, therefore, can be a thoroughly effective agent of religious education only on condition that its whole atmosphere is religious, that it can assume religion as the basis of morality, that religion is the under-current of its life. True religion in school can no more be confined to the first or last period in the school day than can the influence of vital religion in life be restricted to Sundays.

The current confusion between education and instruction has led to many misconceptions as to what ‘religious education’ really means. If we hold firmly to the view that education is training in life, it becomes plain that religious education is training in the religious life, and, therefore, influences the whole of life. There can be no religious education without religious discipline and observances, as well as religious instruction. Formerly the Church acted directly through the schools upon the children of all classes. Now such direct action is confined to Sunday schools, and the action of any church on day schools wholly or partially supplied by the State is very restricted. If religion is the basis of all true education this is much to be regretted. The provision of a complete set of denominational schools, logical as it appears in abstract thought, is beset by practical difficulties, which would be great even were that solution acceptable to the great mass of the people; for the

<sup>1</sup> Letter 7.

number of religious bodies is very large and the adherents of some of them very few. People, moreover, are governed less by reason than by sentiment in controversial matters of religion, and the adverse sentiment of a large party in the nation puts such a solution outside the range of practical politics. The provision of various forms of denominational teaching within every school would meet the requirements of religious education very imperfectly, even if it could be successfully organized. But, at any rate, it would be an important step in the direction of recognizing, and trying to meet, the desires of the parents in the matter of the religious training of their children.

To the home, the Sunday school, and various religious organizations into which the children may be voluntarily gathered, every church must chiefly look in its endeavours to win and retain the children. Laments are frequently heard from ministers of religion that the children are being lost to the churches. That seems quite a natural result of the extrusion of the schools from definite religious organizations. But the situation must be faced as it is, and it may be urged that the churches would do well to bring definite religious influences to bear on the parents to take up more seriously and strenuously their parental responsibilities. It is one of the chief privileges of a religious home to lead its children into fellowship, ever growing closer, with the church to which it owes allegiance. The Church, no more than the State, can afford to dispense with the impetus of family influence. The more the channel of the ordinary school becomes unavailable, the greater is the need for the invention and perfection of substitutes for it. If religion is the centre of all true education, our present system in England

seems to be in very grave danger of degenerating into a very partial training—the cultivation of the intellectual and practical powers, combined with serious neglect of the very highest expression of human life.

The school is the meeting-point of the child and the nation ; it is at once the complement of the family and the expression of national life. It is called for equally by the inability of the family to undertake the whole of the training of its children, and by the need of the nation that its young citizens should enter the common life well equipped in body and mind, and with a sense of social duty and obligation. Whether it be provided and controlled by the State, supported by the families which send their children to it, or maintained partly by some old endowment and partly in one or both of the other ways, matters not in this respect.

The school is, then, an extension of the home circle and a miniature of social life. To the extent to which it is in touch with home thought and feeling, so that the narrower interests and sympathies of home expand easily and without conscious effort into the wider and less personal relations of school, it is successful in performing its task of widening and deepening those interests and sympathies. To the extent to which it holds itself aloof from home aspirations and views, and exalts itself as an independent power, it is condemned to failure in all its highest functions. The school should develop and clarify the opinions and views brought from home, but be careful to avoid setting itself in opposition to them. Its own influence must work from within if it is to be successful, and it cannot do that unless it start from the stream of living energy which has its source in the home life. It seems necessary to insist on this,



because enthusiasts for school training continually write and talk as if the school could disregard the home ; as if, indeed, it received its pupils without experience, or the ideas, views, and trends of longing, which experience forms. No doubt, in childhood these are weak and tentative, but the influences which gave them birth continue to nourish them. Either the school and the home conjoin their forces, or they set them in more or less thorough-going opposition to each other. The school cannot lessen the force of the home life, and it is simply shutting one's eyes to facts to ignore it. Sixty years ago a dignitary of the Church wrote : " Were we to consider only the resolutions, bills, essays, speeches, and schemes, with which this country is deluged on the subject of education, we might be led to conclude that England was a nation the entire youth of which were orphans or foundlings. No influence of home is recognized : the very existence of a parent is ignored."<sup>1</sup> The words have much truth to-day, and they indicate the greatest danger to which such a specialized institution as a school is subject—the temptation so to exalt its own office that its true place as intermediary between family and nation, and delegate of each, is forgotten. The authorities which control school administration are called 'Education' authorities, and this is good in so far as it emphasizes the traditional English view that the function of schools is something wider and more important than teaching. But in so far as it encourages the mistake that school is the one special place of education, and that all education is schooling, it is mischievous in its influence on the thought of parents, of administrators, and of teachers.

<sup>1</sup> Archdeacon Coxe : *Charge*, 1855.

In relation to the elementary schools the opinion is often not obscurely hinted at, and sometimes openly expressed, that the school's duty is to counteract the influence of the home. This is to take up a deplorable attitude. The influence of the home may be defective, but the one chance of improving it is to accept it as far as it has any good in it, and to work in harmony with it and through it. That the general tone and the standard of judgement on conduct are often lower than pure morality would dictate is as true of the working classes as of all other social ranks, but it may be doubted whether they are so much lower as different in expression from those of the classes which so readily condemn them. Often, no doubt, the efforts of working class homes appear clumsy and ill-directed to people whose social training and outlook are different ; but much of that is a matter, not of moral inferiority, but of social convention. In any case, there is a moral tone and a standard of conduct into which the children grow, and if the school would raise them it must get inside them, not attempt to remove the children into a tone and standard at school which implicitly throws doubt on those at home.

In the training of character and conduct, as in that of thought and intellect, the full force of the child's spiritual life is needed. This involves that he feel himself an active member of the social community, and not simply an item under the direction of another's will. "School is not primarily for the teacher but for the pupil."<sup>1</sup> When this is forgotten there may be extreme quiet and decorum of behaviour in school, and the whole machine may work smoothly ; but it is nothing but a machine,

<sup>1</sup> H. Caldwell Cook : *Perse Play Books*, No. 2, Introduction, p. 10.

and its action either crushes the spiritual life of those submitted to its working, or gives to that life an impulse of opposition to all it represents. While producing an outward simulacrum of the law-abiding spirit it often forces into an unnatural and premature activity the spirit of lawlessness. The root objection to a martinet government of children is that in its very nature it is antithetical to education, in that it is an official negation of the child's will.

The most important of the functions of a school is to initiate the child into a society in which the relations are less those of affectionate service and tolerance than those of mutual rights and obligations. In it he learns that he must treat with equal justice those whom he loves, those who are indifferent to him, and those whom he dislikes; that his own wishes must often give way to the desires or customs of his fellows; that there are rules to which he must conform; that there are many authorities besides the obvious one of the masters. In a word, he begins to learn by experience what it is to live in a world among his equals, under a regulated system of laws and customs. Unless this grow out of the life in the out-of-school circle, and continually return into it, the child is not being truly formed. A double personality is being developed, and a severe blow is dealt to natural honesty and frankness. As Mulcaster well said, over three hundred years ago: "This mannering of them is not for teachers alone, because they communicate therein . . . both with naturall parentes, to whom that point appertaineth nearest, as of most authoritie with them, and with all honest persons, which seing a child doing euill, are bid in conscience to terrifie and check him as the quality of the childes offence, and the circumstance

of their owne person doth seeme best to require.”<sup>1</sup> This wise old Elizabethan schoolmaster, with over a score of years’ experience behind him, saw clearly that out-of-school and in-school influences must harmonize and work together if the education of the child is to prosper. So he puts as first “of all the meanes which pollicie and consideration haue deuised to further the good training vp of children, either to haue them well learned, or vertueously manered . . . conference between those persons, which haue interest in children, to see them well brought vp.”<sup>2</sup> And, recognizing the importance of the influence of the social circle he recommended conference between parents and neighbours, teachers and neighbours, parents and teachers, and teachers and teachers. In short, he conceived education as a social work, and, therefore, one which concerns the whole community. Though he was insistent on the special nature of the teacher’s functions, and on the consequent need of definite training for them, he gave no countenance to the idea that teaching is the whole of education, or that education as a whole is a specific profession. The teacher is an organ through which the family and the community carry on that work of general interest of training the children ; in his mode of working he is a specialist, but his special skill should be exercised in harmony with social opinion and desires. This is the essence of Mulcaster’s views on the matter, and though the plans he suggested for giving them effect must be modified to meet the change in social conditions, yet it seems to us that they are both essentially true and very pertinent to our present-day needs.

The problem of first importance for the school is, then,

<sup>1</sup> *Positions*, ch. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* ch. 44.

how to take up the child's natural energy, with the trend and colouring it has already received, into the school life, and so, by the careful organization of that life, to ennoble it—to prune away the faults and strengthen the weaknesses of its developing attitude ; and how in doing all this to win the support of the outside opinion amid which the child lives. It is only another phase of the perennial task of making the interaction between the individual and his environment as prolific as may be of good results. No movement of recent years has been more successful in winning the support of the home circle, and the enthusiastic devotion of the children themselves, than that of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. For these reasons the movement is full of educational vitality, and only when the schools can show equal success in getting inside the lives of their pupils, so as to leaven them, will they, too, be full of educational life.

The Scout movement is successful because it recognizes practically that the child and the youth have self-respect which only needs a sense of responsibility to grow into a very valuable ruler of conduct ; that they are not opposed to law when the demands of the law are congruent with their nature ; that they have abundant vital energy which must find a vent either in following out their own purposes or in doing its best to burst the bonds with which authority tries to confine it. All these valuable trends of spiritual life are cherished in the Scout movement, not regarded as manifestations of original sin to be borne with what patience we may when they cannot be repressed. It is because they are cherished that a boy or girl gets true education of character as a Scout or a Guide.

The school should act on the same principles in ways

adapted to its own conditions. It should organize its pupils as a self-governing community of which the teacher is a part, not as a gang of slaves among whom only the will of the master counts for anything. It should win to its side the force of life which must otherwise act against it: it should train that self-respect which is also respect for the good name of the school because it is 'my' school, to which it is my pride to belong and which it would be my shame to disgrace. Then will the spirit which has its fount of inspiration in the school permeate the whole life, and the unity on which we are insisting will be promoted. What home is there which would not be delighted to see its boys and girls growing in true manliness and womanliness, and would not be itself affected by its reaction to the growing spirit of a noble life which animates its children? That is a way in which the school can improve the homes, and its influence may well be as beneficial in one social class as in another.

The pupils can throw their vitality into the service of the school only when they feel that they have a responsibility for its work, its discipline, and its good name. Thus some form of corporate self-government is demanded, and, through this, personal self-government is developed. Schools and classes have been successfully organized as 'Junior Republics'; in others, details of administration are placed in the hands of the pupils with excellent results. This is the spirit that underlies the prefect system which is traditional in the great public schools, and is acknowledged to be their most effective instrument of education. It has been found by experience to be thoroughly successful in schools of all grades, and with pupils of all ages. Mr.

H. Caldwell Cook gives as the result of his experience with lower forms in a secondary school: "The most well-ordered classes are those in which a body of boy-officials has control,"<sup>1</sup> and the application of the principle in elementary schools has led to equally happy results.

In a very suggestive pamphlet on the introduction of self-government through a system of prefects into some of the elementary schools in Warwickshire, Mr. Jewsbury well indicates the objects sought: "To endeavour to turn out manly boys who know and are prepared to do the straight thing, the right thing, simply because it is straight and right; to make them feel the sense of responsibility, to train them in self-reliance and power of initiative, to teach them self-respect, to feel something of the corporate nature of a school and that the school as a whole in character, reputation and usefulness is affected by the actions and conduct of individuals; to arouse a keen interest in all that concerns the school, to have a reasonable pride in their school and a constant care for its honour and good name."<sup>2</sup> Mr. Jewsbury emphasizes the good effect of responsibility on boys who have no great love or aptitude for ordinary lessons, who thus gain an interest in school life which before was lacking, and both develop in self-respect and win the respect of their schoolfellows by proving that they, too, can do well something well worth doing. Similarly, Mr. Cook remarks "It has proved a good plan to put in authority aged persons who otherwise might be in danger of doing little or nothing."<sup>3</sup> It might be added that this kind

<sup>1</sup> *Perse Play Books*, No. 4, Introduction, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> *The Prefect System in Elementary Schools*, pp. 4-5.    <sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 22.

of training is the best possible, not only for them but for all children. The spiritless little book-worm, so apt to be regarded as the prize product of the school, foreshadows in his ineptitude for responsible office his probable obscurity in later life.

Mr. Jewsbury anticipates that such a system, extended as it is to the pupils' out-of-school life, may at first be regarded as organized espionage both by some of the children and by their parents ; but he is convinced, from the actual working of the plan, that when it has been wisely introduced its critics soon become its advocates. Of course, the winning of this public approval means that a great step has been taken in the unifying of the influences of home and school. Moreover, especially in dealing with offences out of school, "the co-operation of parents...is most valuable, and should be sought at all times. All serious matters should be brought directly to their notice ; and if they can be got to work with and support the Head, much good will be done."<sup>1</sup>

No movement seems to us so full of promise for weaving schools of all grades into the lives of the people, for reviving the parents' feeling of interest in the training of their children and sense of responsibility for a large and important part of it, for concentrating in the line of the training of character that innate spiritual force which otherwise is so woefully squandered, than this for securing the active co-operation of pupils in promoting the corporate welfare of their school.

The extent to which the same kind of co-operation of both children and parents can be obtained in that intellectual work of the school which is its second

<sup>1</sup> P. 17.



important function depends upon the same general conditions. The system of self-government in school succeeds because it wins to its service natural impulses and desires of children, and in no way runs counter to their interests. If the lessons are equally congruent in matter and method with impulses to mental activity they will similarly be taken up into the intellectual life. The desire to learn is as innate and as strong as is the desire to act. The dullest and most inert student of school lessons shows abundant keenness in acquiring the knowledge which attracts him because it seems to him worth having. All observers of the young have pointed out this characteristic, but, as a rule, schools have taken little account of it. What the mature scholar thinks children ought to learn decides what is put before them, and both in nature and in amount this has led to a method of teaching which treats the children as passive recipients of the knowledge of others. The point of view of the selectors and that of the prospective learners are necessarily very different; so it is hardly matter for wonder that in school studies there has so often been a great gulf between what is and what ought to be. For long weary years schools spent their time in trying vainly to get their pupils to recognize the beauties of the classics and the advisability of exertion in order to master the languages in which they were written, or to assimilate the dry bones of facts in English subjects. No call was made on the imagination, nothing was given to stir the heart and inspire fruitful constructive thought or provide means for its practical outcome in act. Lessons were to the children dull and profitless, for they did not give the sense of increasing power and growing wealth of life. It was evident that the results of the schools' efforts

were wholly incommensurate with the time and labour bestowed, and to justify continuance in the hoary scholastic tradition it had to be assumed that this grinding of the air—as it must inevitably have appeared to the young grinders—was in itself an excellent way of strengthening the mental muscular system. The question whether such strengthening could not be attained concurrently with more demonstrable benefit was for long not seriously faced, and is still regarded by many with suspicion as a sign of a tendency towards a ‘soft pedagogy.’ “As though work and play, pleasure and learning, a measure of natural freedom and a natural measure of restraint were mutually exclusive terms. By Play I mean the *doing* any thing one *knows*, with one’s heart in it.”<sup>1</sup>

To set beings so full of vital energy and so practical in outlook as are the young to grinding for the sake of grinding, with no visible flour resulting wherewith to make bread, is to take the very surest way to arouse their antagonism to the whole process. For long this antagonism extended to the masters, and the schools failed in the cultivation of the true feeling of corporate life as markedly as in general intellectual influence. That division of the school world into two opposed forces of masters and boys has come to an end in all that relates to personal intercourse in proportion as the principle of recognizing the boys’ rights, and enlisting their friendly co-operation in discipline, has been acted upon. It is by no means at an end in the matter of lessons, because the same principle is so often explicitly rejected or implicitly ignored. It is still quite a common tradition that the boy will, as a matter of course, shirk his lessons when-

<sup>1</sup> H. C. Cook : *Perse Play Books*, No. 4, pp. 64, 62.

ever he can, and this tradition influences masters as well as boys. Its abolition is the greatest intellectual reform needed in the schools, but it can only be removed on similar lines to those which have succeeded in replacing enmity by friendly co-operation in matters of personal relation. That was accomplished by harmonizing the attitudes of boys and masters, by frankly accepting the boy as he is and giving him in school relations the kind of outlet for his energies which he cares to take, instead of leaving him to find one in illegitimate ways and then punishing him for following the promptings of his nature in the only paths left open to him. Similarly, intellectual outlets which the pupils care to take must be provided in school studies, and this means the frank acknowledgement that the starting-point must be found in what they esteem of value, and the impetus in what they take joy in doing. The main end of education, even in school, is not the training of the intellect, but the preparation for a full and noble life, and such preparation must concern itself with the heart far more than with the head—with feelings of worth, standards of right and wrong, and principles and habits of action, all taken up into the very inmost core of being.

In the matter of what is taught schools which are as yet independent of State control have to break only the bonds of tradition. Those which are under public authorities have the harder task of attaining and preserving their liberty. In all, the matter of how the teaching is given is more fully under the teacher's control, though his freedom is restricted by the necessity usually imposed on him of meeting the requirements of examinations or of inspectors, representing, it may be, a view of educative instruction very different from his

own and able to back that view by the sanctions of public credit and necessary income.

In every case the educational problem is to adapt the work of the school to the demands from without, when once these are recognized as expressing needs naturally felt by the children of the class of society which supports the school. The public schools have made great concessions to the modern view of desirable knowledge, but it would be somewhat bold to assert that the process of adaptation to modern life and thought has yet gone as far as is desirable, and certainly the public school boy is not usually remarkable for enthusiasm for his school studies. The schools for the middle and working classes are now largely under either local or central public control or both, and it seems to be assumed that in this way public opinion is brought to bear on their working. But, except in the most general sense, this is open to question. A town council may be an efficient body for general local administration and the allocation of the produce of the rates, and a Board of Education may well perform similar functions in relation to schools for the country as a whole. But neither can be accepted as a sure exponent of the views, aspirations, and needs, of the families which send their children to different schools. The administrative bodies are not in sufficiently close touch with any one class, and are more or less in the clutch of their own machinery. The late E. A. Freeman spoke of "the slower understandings of men whom official routine hinders from looking facts in the face,"<sup>1</sup> and the history of schools has supplied many illustrations of the truth of the remark in the attitude both of schoolmasters and of administrators. Not the good will, but the clear

<sup>1</sup> *History and Conquests of the Saracens* : Preface.

insight into the particular needs of individual schools, must be lacking to men who direct the administration of all the schools of a nation, or even of a district.

That scholastic 'idol of the theatre' which assumes as an axiom the necessity for the learning of certain facts, though they are but an infinitesimal part of the rich stores of human knowledge, is at the bottom of much official laying down of schemes of study. Once this phantasy is banished the way will be open for an unprejudiced determination of the work of each school separately by a consideration of the actual needs it has to meet. The local authority should be a combining centre, securing that all the needs of the district are met, and that waste is avoided; for, as the community is increasingly made aware, schools cost money. But each school presents its own problem, though those of many schools of the same grade—especially elementary schools—in the same district may be closely similar. For the satisfactory solution of the problems of teaching the co-operation of the parents in influencing their children is required, and to secure this their opinions and wishes must not be ignored. At the same time the relation of the work of the school to the wider needs of the community has to be kept in mind. Lastly, the expert knowledge of the teacher is needed to secure that the objects sought by the school are not narrow or low, and to organize the means by which those objects are to be attained. As he is entrusted with the actual work, his active sympathy with those objects is as indispensable a condition of success as is that of the children and their parents. No school can be a really effective agent of education unless each teacher is in real and hearty sympathy with the whole lives of his pupils, so

that his ideals for them are realizable because of that affinity.

Some mode of making articulate these three trends of opinion, and of synthesizing them into one great stream of school life, is much to be desired. Perhaps consultative committees on which parents, teachers, and official administrators, met and discussed the aims and general work of each school would meet the case, if the parents could be convinced that the deliberations would really have weight in the decision of what intellectual fare the school should offer for the consumption of their children. As the influence of the family on what the children actually try to learn is both strong and unavoidable, it would surely be wise to try to secure its active co-operation, rather than by disregarding it to assure its passive, if not its active, antagonism.

This need for co-operation is especially felt in the case of elementary and lower middle class schools. Wealthy parents can choose a school which broadly meets their desires, or can provide for teaching at home, but the lower one descends in the social scale the more the choice is limited, because, though the schools are many, the differences between them are slight. They are organized on the assumption that the relative worth of branches of learning can be abstractly determined, without reference to the particular people who are to do the learning. This is to see incentive as an external force which can be applied indifferently to any spiritual life, no matter what its past history may have been, instead of in the stirring by something cognate to it of an inner dynamic force already existing. Incentive must be relative to actual life: both to the life which has been and to that which is foreseen. That life centres in the family, and every

family, though it may have much that is individual to itself, yet shares in the general views as to what the children ought to learn which are common to the local social circle of which it forms a part. No doubt, these views may be narrow, and they will certainly appear so to people whose social surroundings have been more tinged with intellectual culture. They may need enlarging; indeed, education is always an attempt to transcend actual common attainment. But they should be an important factor in deciding the kind of things the children in any school should study.

Universal and compulsory schooling for more than a generation has not convinced the mass of the working classes of the value of much that their children are taught in school. The children commonly show that they share the home feeling by the little enthusiasm they manifest in much of their work, and by ceasing to pursue their studies immediately external compulsion is removed. The few who see in the mental food offered a means of rising in the social scale, and pass by the aid of scholarships to higher schools, too often learn to despise their origin, and are apt to discover that the knowledge assumed in the circles they wish to enter includes much besides that which is imparted in school, and which can only be gained in life. The best of them succeed, but others are unfitted for one kind of work and one class of society without being fitted for another.

Certainly the whole school should not be organized as a forcing-bed for a few children who show most precocious intellectual promise, but with regard to the needs of the great majority of its scholars. Those look forward complacently to living much as their parents have lived; they are interested in what bears on that

sort of life, and both they and their parents are prepared to welcome all which seems to them likely to improve it. Did schools, and those who govern schools, but grasp the vital fact that their efforts are successful in proportion as they respond to felt needs, and that the needs the children most feel are related to the opinions which experience has taught their parents, they would give more effort to the endeavour to ascertain what the parents think good, and to make that the nucleus of what they provide. "The opinion of those who have brought the children into the world, and worked to bring them up, is not to be despised. . . . Those who will have the responsibility of putting their children out to work might well be consulted as to the same children's education. They know, better than teachers, the life their children will probably have to lead ; and they recognize, better than educationalists, that to know *how* to work, to have the habit of working cheerfully and well, is more important than knowledge." <sup>1</sup>

The failure of the elementary schools to win the general confidence of the working classes shows that they have not given what the parents wish, and have supplied much about which they do not care. In various degrees this is true of all our schools, to the extent to which the decision of what should be learnt is held to be the function of scholastic authorities independently of the opinion of the parents and the social circle to which they belong. It is not at all urged that the school should have no voice in the matter, but that it should base its more detailed determination of what it proposes to teach on a general consideration of what is felt to be needed for life, and is consequently thought worthy of a real

<sup>1</sup> *Seems So!* ch. 20.



effort to learn, by the people among whom the children live, and from whom they derive their prepossessions and predispositions to value or to contemn what is offered them. Closeness of relation to the needs, the aspirations, and the estimates of value, current in the homes of its scholars is an indispensable condition of successful effort to purify those needs, raise those aspirations, and revise those estimates. The school, then, loses in effectiveness in proportion as it ignores the home as a co-operative agent in the education of the children.

In every social grade are children of various capacities. Most show medium ability both in intellectual and in practical work, but there are some who are good on one side but markedly weak on the other. In the world both the thinker and the practical man are needed, and opinions might well differ as to which is the more important. In any case, the traditional school customs of providing food likely to attract only the intellectual, and of stigmatizing as dullards those whose 'brains are in their fingers,' is hideously unjust and consummately unwise. Happily, this is being recognized, though as yet slowly and partially, and somewhat grudgingly. The needs will only be met when in addition to the schools of the majority, giving a fair mixture of the intellectual and the practical, there are also schools in which each of these forms of capacity is treated as the handmaid of the other, and oriented in relation to the requirements of that other. Where but one school is available, the need can only be met by a frank trifurcation within it. The giving of the same definite number of hours of exactly the same practical manual work to every child, irrespective both of his capacities and of the calls of interest growing out of his life, is but another mode

of forcing the growing life into a rigid mould, only less indefensible than the traditional monopoly of book subjects because the mould has been made less rigid.

Differences of capacity are in kind and not only in degree, and they should be the main determinant of the choice between the actual possibilities of future occupation open to the child. But one kind of work demands a different preparation from another, and again the differences are both in kind and in degree. Some forms of work taken up after school are in themselves educative; notably those in which individual initiative and adaptability are required. A boy does not cease his education when he leaves school to enter one of these. And those who speak from much experience say that many of them can only be properly learnt when they are begun at an early age. The interests of true education demand, not that this opinion be derided, but that it be investigated, and the age of passing from school to work decided on the merits of each case, not by a hard and fast *à priori* rule based on the assumption that education always ends when work is begun. There is force in the contention put forward as representing much working-class opinion: "Until different types of mind are fully recognized and developed, not by different degrees of the same type of education, but by different types of education, extending not to one leaving-age but to suitable leaving-ages, the human resources of the nation cannot be properly organized."<sup>1</sup>

It would seem, then, that a real national system of education demands a much more varied supply of schools, and a much freer determination of their work, than the present tendency to the uniformity which is so

<sup>1</sup> *Seems So!* ch. 20.

dear to the bureaucratic mind, and is misnamed 'system,' gives in the present or promises in the future. A true system is a harmonious synthesis of differences, and in complex modern life an organization of schools must be condemned as lacking in system in almost exact proportion as it approaches uniformity. National concern with the education of its citizens will only have its proper effect when it is recognized, both in theory and in practice, that community needs are met by a combination of individual efforts, and that those needs themselves are a synthesis of class needs and even of individual needs ; so that, both to classes and to individuals, is allowed as much freedom in managing the education of their children as they enjoy in other matters of less vital importance to the national welfare. In a word, national care for education is most efficient when it is least directly regulative.

One of the chief educational functions of the State is the securing that the supply of suitable teachers for the schools is adequate. Here, again, direct action of either central or local authority is merely a question of expediency. If the teaching profession could be adequately staffed by volunteers, there would be no more need for the policy of nursing now pursued than there is in such professions as law and medicine. Of course, the key of the whole situation is a golden one. In other professions there is a reasonable prospect of securing adequate remuneration ; so, from the ranks of each are heard complaints of over-staffing. The supply is not directly stimulated, though scholarships to places of higher learning than the elementary school are used as aids in the somewhat costly preparation required. People join such professions because they feel attracted towards the work, and in each they enter a corporate body which guarantees

their competence. The State does not directly interfere, yet as each profession adequately meets the national needs, it gives the country a national system.

With the scholastic calling all is different. It is generally inadequately paid, and it is only beginning to be organized tentatively into a corporate profession which, through a system of registration, will in future guarantee the efficiency of its members. The supply of entrants into its ranks is artificially stimulated by the awarding of bursarships to boys and girls on condition that they become teachers, and subsequently of scholarships to help in defraying the cost of their training, which carry a legal obligation to a minimum number of years' service. Though primarily intended to staff the elementary schools, this is also an important source of supply for the secondary schools, especially those maintained by the Local Authorities. Naturally, an undertaking to teach is lightly given by those who could not otherwise secure the offered resources. So, young people enter upon this intensely special work, with all its demands upon spiritual qualities, who feel no call to it, who have little sympathy with children, and who regard it simply as a not too objectionable way of earning a living. If they get to delight in the work all is well ; but if they do not all is ill, both with them and with their unfortunate pupils.

Entrance into the ranks of teachers in schools of higher than elementary rank has hitherto been open to any persons who could persuade principals or governors to appoint them. Doubtless, many have been drawn into the work because they were strongly attracted by it. Such men and women take their profession seriously, and endeavour by thought and critical examination of their work to become as efficient as possible. But it is

undeniable that this has not been the case with all. Want of success in some other walk of life, or inability to find a more attractive way of earning a livelihood, has induced some to take refuge in school. It is unlikely that such people will show the true educative spirit and try to become competent to carry out the difficult task they have so lightly undertaken.

This haphazard way of staffing the schools largely by people who have never given serious consideration to the nature of the work or their own fitness for it is indefensible. It would not be tolerated in any other profession. No doctor is allowed to practise until he has received an adequate preparation for his work, but anyone may undertake the nurture of the souls of the young. It is recognized that there is a special body of knowledge and a special kind of skill needed by a man or woman who would treat the human body: the analogy to the treatment of the soul is seldom acknowledged. It can hardly be urged that bodily life is less open to observation in every-day experience than is mental life, that it is in itself more difficult to understand, or that its health is more important. No, the root of the belief that no special preparation is needed by a teacher is the confusion between the acquisition of information and education. 'One who knows can tell what he knows, and therefore can teach, and to teach is to educate.' That is the insecure foundation of the common opinion.

Happily for England it has been commonly recognized that character and personality are essential to a good schoolmaster, and men of character and personality influence others both consciously and unconsciously. Sympathy and the insight into motives and temptations which comes to sympathetic souls with experience of life

help even in the earliest dealings with boys. Yet mistakes are made, and it is through his errors that the earnest schoolmaster is led to reflect on his work that he may improve it. That this has been done with respect to teaching as well as to dealing with conduct is proved by the success of many great schoolmasters. It is this thinking for themselves, and not the mere continuance in teaching, which has made so many admirable teachers of men who had received no special preparation for their work before entering upon it. In truth, by their own thought they trained themselves. No one can read the lives and works of great schoolmasters without seeing how earnestly they thought about their work. They "worked their facts, and not their theories," as Thring put it, but they *did* work them, and that not doggedly and mechanically, but as problems to be solved. They meditated on their work, noted their errors, found the reasons for them, apprehended the principles which underlie successful work and invented modes of applying those principles to their own special problems. So their work was embodied theory, and theory they had made their own in the only real way—by living it. This it was that made them great; not length of unexamined experience. Such men gradually train themselves for their work, but they do it all after that work has begun, unlike the medical man who learns the theory of his profession, and the general lines of successful application, before he begins to practise.

The majority of people who take up teaching for no very definite reason are little likely to train themselves by assiduous thought on their work unless they be helped to do it before entering on the actual life of school. That is the special function of departments and colleges for the

professional training of teachers. There, removed from the carking cares of the school, the problems of school life and work may be thought out in the light of the wisdom both of the past and of the present—thought out on all their sides: from the point of view of conduct, from that of knowledge, from that of present and future service. Thus would the ‘born teacher’—the man whose deepest longings find satisfaction in training the young—enter on the work with a definite purpose and clear conceptions, and be saved many a disappointment to himself, which is also an injury to his pupils; the unfit person may learn to recognize his unfitness by the repulsion he feels for both the theory and the practice of the work, and may turn his energies into channels in which they will be at least innocuous to the community; the indifferent may receive that inspiration without which their work will be but mechanical and deadening.

There is, then, abundant justification for the action of the Teachers’ Registration Council in demanding evidence of professional aptitude, as well as of character and of adequate learning, from candidates for recognition as members of the teaching profession. Children in school should be saved from the experiments of the teacher who is an amateur in thought as well as in deed. No matter what preparation is given, the beginner must always be a beginner in practice, no training can make him an experienced teacher. But training can and should secure that he is not a beginner in thought, but that from the first his efforts are made intelligently—that is, with a clear conception of the end they are intended to reach, and of the conditions under which they may be expected to attain fruition. “We know by experience it selfe, that it is a mervelous paine, to finde oute but a short

waie by long wandering” ;<sup>1</sup> it is the function of training to lessen this pain and shorten this wandering by making use of the experience of others.

Here comes in a danger incident to training. Teaching is certainly practical work, and the object of training is to prepare men and women for that work. Is not the surest way to learn to do anything, first to watch someone else do it well, and then go and do it oneself? It is so, broadly speaking, when the activity is one which both can and should be made, as fully as possible, automatic. But when it is dealing with life it is not so at all. The rule-of-thumb procedure which simply imitates the methods of another demands uniformity of material, and human minds and dispositions are infinitely various. Not by external mechanical method, but by sympathetic inspiration and suggestion, can they be raised to the activity through which alone they can be educated. It is, then, from the inner thoughts of the heart that really efficient teaching springs, and it is far less a matter of ‘method’—except in the broadest sense—than is often assumed.

Professional preparation has, then, two chief objects. In the first place, it should aim at awakening in those who are proposing to become teachers a keen sense of the importance of the work, enthusiasm for its aims, loving but discerning sympathy with children, insight into the spiritual forces which are to be directed. Secondly, it should endeavour to put them on the right road to the attainment of skill which will ever increase through years of practice, because it has nothing fixed or mechanical in it. Of these, the second depends on the first ; for, unless the first be well secured the skill attained will be merely

<sup>1</sup> Ascham : *The Scholemaster*.



executive, and will be undirected by any clear and consistent idea of purpose to be attained. A training college, therefore, in the short session which is at present deemed sufficient for its work, should aim primarily at giving an attitude of mind and feeling, at inculcating a few fundamental principles and securing that each student applies these in his own way. This should be the object of practice, which is thus a kind of laboratory work subsidiary to the more theoretical studies. Here it is quality, not quantity, that counts. A little work, really conceived and thought out by the student—though under the general supervision of the experienced teacher who is training him—and well considered and criticized by himself afterwards, does far more than a much greater amount of practice less exhaustively treated to develop the habits of mind and feeling which are the source of all skill which is artistic and life-giving and not mere mechanical craftsmanship. The object of practical work in a course of study mainly theoretical is to keep the thoughts and aspirations of the student in close touch with reality, lest they degenerate into mere dreams and sentimental longings.

This is only to recognize the limits of possibility. The time devoted to training is too short both for a thorough study of theory and for abundant practice. The course of preparation for a medical man does not attempt to combine 'walking the hospital' with theoretical studies. The latter are made preliminary to the former, and are illustrated by practical demonstrations. No one criticizes this on the ground that theory is of no use to the practitioner, and really such an argument has no greater weight in reference to preparation for teaching. Unless theory be well digested it is of little worth,

even if it be not worse than useless as giving an ungrounded confidence. And to assimilate great and wide-reaching thoughts demands both time and freedom from the worry of competing claims.

On the other hand, practical skill cannot be gained during a training college course. The amount of practice is too small, and the conditions can never be quite the same as those under which actual school work is done. A student does not feel himself, and is not felt by anybody else—least of all by the children—to be in the position of a regular member of the school staff. Real skill can come only through actual experience ; the business of the theoretical preparation is to secure that the experience is of a kind to lead to artistic skill and not to mere mechanical facility. This it must do by inculcating principles of work, by showing—by demonstration followed by experimental application by the student and free discussion—how they may be applied.

Always, however, it should be insisted that, as true teaching is the action of the mind of the teacher on those of his pupils, no person's method can with profit be slavishly followed by another. The most dangerous temptation to all engaged in the training of teachers is insistence on the supreme value of specific methods of teaching the various branches of knowledge. Those who are being trained are young, often impressionable, and always inexpert. The lessons given before them by those who are training them win their admiration, and are taken as models for imitation. They see a successful lesson, and they are apt to attribute the success to the method, and not to the teacher. So, too often, they try to reproduce the form of the lesson instead of to kindle in their own souls the spiritual fire which made it the

good piece of work it was. On this rock, indeed, training has often split in the past, so that to many minds it implies the production of mechanism. People went to Yverdon to learn the 'method' of Pestalozzi, and many brought away with them nothing but a machine for killing thought. Many have practised the 'method' of Frœbel's kindergarten in such a way as to make it a dreary round of mechanical tricks. So it is ever. Nothing is more deadening than a stereotyped method, and no idea is further removed from a true conception of education than that detailed modes of teaching can be set forth which are applicable by all teachers, to all children, in all circumstances. In education it is the spirit, and the spirit alone, that quickeneth. Heart to heart and mind to mind is every piece of really educative teaching, and in that intimate contact the only method possible is that which is in the very life of the mind which directs. This is not to disparage method: on the contrary it is to exalt it as far as the living and creative is above the lifeless and deadening.

Skill in teaching is, then, most surely attained when it is first sought indirectly through an absorption of the whole spirit in the aims and general means of education, so that the mind is oriented, and dynamic forces of life are excited which are strong enough not to be turned aside by the difficulties which will daily arise in school. But that is only the first step. There can be no skill without practice, so criticized that errors may be detected and thought given to how such mistakes may be avoided in the future. This real practice, as distinct from the demonstrative practice of the theoretical course of preparation, can only take place under actual school conditions. The true teacher is always under training, in the

sense that he is ever giving thought and care to make his work better. If in early years he can get the help of critical suggestions from more experienced teachers in the school in which he is working, his progress is likely to be much more rapid and sure.

The preliminary preparation which can be given by a training college can never produce skilled teachers. It fulfils its function when those it sends into the schools are on the right road to the attainment of skill, and, what is far more important, so see their work in its relation to the whole life of the community that they will be something much higher and better than skilled teachers—centres from which emanate spiritual life. A training college only begins the work of cultivating professional skill. That work must be continued in schools, and will be best done when skilled supervision of the beginner's efforts is available. There is need that this should be recognized professionally, for until it is, the work of training cannot be adequately done. After the course of the training college should follow a course in approved schools, corresponding to the hospital training of the medical man. There, under the guidance of competent masters and mistresses, the actual working-out of principles, the becoming familiar with questions of organization and practical discipline, and all else that makes the competent schoolmaster or schoolmistress, should be studied. Only then should the course of professional training be regarded as complete.

A training college is, then, only one of the agents of training, and its course only a step in the process. It would be well if its students should, before entrance, have seen enough of school life and work to know whether it appeals to them, and to understand the matters

to be considered, but they should not have served on the staff of a school long enough to have formed stereotyped habits of dealing with children. Its essential work should be the development of an educative spirit and the apprehension of the fundamental principles underlying the means that spirit will use ; in a word, theoretical, in the sense of being primarily concerned with thinking and feeling, not in the sense of being up in the clouds, or disconnected from actual life. Though theory is necessary, theory remote from fact is mischievous. The college course should be followed by a training in school, where the emphasis would be laid on that practical effort which in the training college work should be subordinate. Surely the art of teaching is held in low estimation when it is assumed that it can be acquired in one session at a training college.

We shall be in a false position so long as schools complain that the training colleges do not send out skilled teachers, but people who have largely still to learn their work, and the training colleges accept the assumption that the production of skilled teachers ought to be expected of them. Both schools and training colleges need to appreciate more truly the function in teaching of vital and creative ideas, and to put mere dexterity in the 'tricks of the trade' in its proper very subordinate place as an educative instrument. And vital ideas cannot grow in an ordinary mind while it is harassed by the minutiae of unfamiliar practical work, and filled with the trivial but disturbing details which accompany the efforts of the tyro in teaching. The training college course should be the teacher's spiritual preparation for his professional life ; his workman-like skill should be acquired subsequently in school.

A further question remains. *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* If it be necessary to the efficiency of a system of schools as an instrument for the education of the nation's children that the teachers should recognize the true nature of their work, be inspired by its spirit, and have thought seriously of its relation to the life of the community, it is surely at least equally important that similar demands should be made of all who direct and supervise the teachers' work, who determine the kind of schools which shall be maintained, and who actively administer the whole system. Doubtless, administrators must look at the problems of education from a different point of view from that of teachers, but they should not undertake the duties of an office in which they can do so much to make or mar without serious preparation through study of the problems which will face them. Otherwise we have reproduced in sober earnest the irony with which Socrates drew the picture of the self-confident Euthydemus :

“When, my friends, our Euthydemus here arrives at the proper age, and any state question is proposed for discussion, it is very evident, from the nature of his studies, that he will not hold himself aloof from its councils, and I fancy that he has already prepared a splendid proem for his public orations, taking precautions against being supposed to have learned anything from anybody. It is clear, then, that when he commences his harangue, his exordium will be something in this style :—‘O men of Athens! never at any time have I learnt anything from anybody, nor, if I have been informed that there were certain individuals who were clever both in speech and action, have I ever sought their company, nor have I been careful that any of the know-

ing ones should become my teacher. Nay, I have even pursued the opposite course, for I constantly avoided not only learning anything from anybody, but even the appearance of so doing. Nevertheless, such opinions as suggest themselves to me spontaneously, I will submit to you for your consideration.' So, on the part of those who are seeking to obtain a government medical appointment, it might answer for them to begin a speech thus:—'I, O men of Athens! have never at any time learned the medical art from any one, nor have I been desirous to obtain any medical man as my teacher, for I have constantly avoided not only learning anything from the medical men, but even the appearance of having studied this science. Nevertheless, confer upon me this appointment, for I will endeavour to educate myself by experimentalizing upon you.'"<sup>1</sup>

We are told that "all the company laughed at this specimen of an exordium," but is it an unfair representation of the attitude of those who believe no training to be necessary either for teachers or for those who inspect and organize their work? The only explanation is the common assumption that there is no 'science'—or theoretical knowledge—related to school work, and that none is either necessary or desirable; that all that it is possible to know of the art can be gained from experience, and can be gained in no other way. So the work of the school is looked at in itself; out of relation to the life of the community and with no determinate function in that life.

It is good to learn from the evidence of Sir Lewis Selby-Bigge before the Royal Commission on the Civil Service that the chiefs of the Board of Education "like

<sup>1</sup> Xenophon: *Memorabilia*, trans. by Levien, bk. iv. ch. 2.

men with a taste for education as well as a taste for administration,"<sup>1</sup> and that it is "very desirable that inspectors should have practical acquaintance, through experience of teaching if possible, with schools of the grade they should have to inspect."<sup>2</sup> It is not so satisfactory to find that for the administrative functions of the Board it is held that "such knowledge is not essential,"<sup>3</sup> for that suggests that the Board's conception of education is narrowed down to what is done inside a schoolroom. That administrators, and to a less degree inspectors, need not be skilled in this is undeniable; but unless they are qualified to consider and decide every question of the administration of schools from the standpoint of the educational welfare of the nation, they rank with Euthydemus. Sir Lewis assures us that the Board's inspectors "are a body of very highly qualified educational experts indeed,"<sup>4</sup> but that assurance would be more impressive if the giver had not just expressed the opinion that "almost everybody is an educational expert."<sup>5</sup> However that may be, the fact remains that, like Socrates' medical man, inspectors and administrators become experts by experimenting upon those submitted to their care; for no evidence of a preliminary study of what specially relates to their future work is demanded. At the most some teaching experience is preferred in candidates for the inspectorate, and that gives no guarantee that the wider problems that face the inspector and the administrator have ever received consideration. It is the same with the administrative officials of local authorities, and in their case there is no security that those appointed may not lack even the

<sup>1</sup> Question 8823.<sup>2</sup> Question 9083.<sup>3</sup> Question 9083.<sup>4</sup> Question 9444.<sup>5</sup> Question 9032.



personal qualifications which the Board of Education is careful to secure. So long as those appointed to administer and inspect have to learn their work empirically it is more optimistic than rational to expect that the nation's schools will satisfy the nation's needs.

Certainly, the only way in which a person can now prepare himself for administrative work in education is empirically, by rising through subordinate posts to positions of authority and influence. The natural consequence too often results: he becomes a mere official, regarding everything from the point of view of machinery, seeing evidence of successful work in multitudes of statistical returns, apt to measure all by one hard and fast rule. The reason is that from the first the routine work so fills his mind and occupies his time that he has no leisure, even if he feel the need, for a deep consideration of the broad human problems which lie at the bottom of all school work, and which do not yield themselves to statistical measurement. It is most desirable that at least one of the universities should institute a course of training for inspectors and other administrators, as well as one for teachers.

To look forward to the time when all concerned with schools have wide and carefully considered views on the work of education in general, and the part schools can properly take in that work, is to look far ahead. But surely it is a true ideal, for it is a possible, and undeniably a desirable, state of things, and one in line, it may be hoped, with present tendencies. In his ideal republic Plato saw no salvation for the State unless philosophers should be kings; we may urge that the kings—or all that bear rule or fill office in our scholastic republic—should at least be philosophers in the sense that, by

meditation and study as well as by experience, they have learnt what true education means, what are the mutual relations of its agents, and in what consists its ineffable importance for the nation.

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